

# SOLDIER

MAGAZINE OF THE BRITISH ARMY

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# SOLDIER

## in this issue

APRIL 2012 Vol 68/4



**Cover picture (left):** Pte Jack Marshman (3 Para) is forging a fearsome reputation in the explosive world of mixed martial arts and was due to challenge for a world title as this issue went to press (page 90) Picture: Graeme Main

**Background image:** Injured Service personnel enjoy some valuable recreation time during a trip to La Plagne in the French Alps with the Not Forgotten Association (pages 43-45) Picture: Steve Dock

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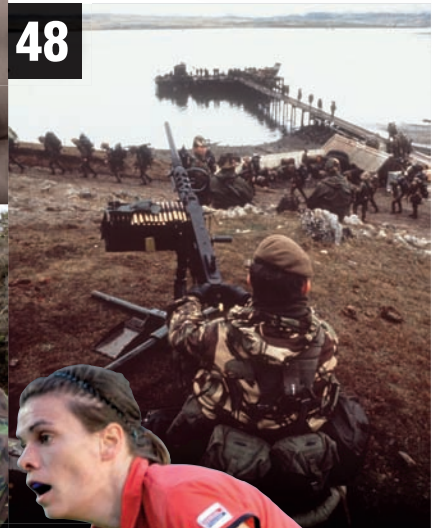
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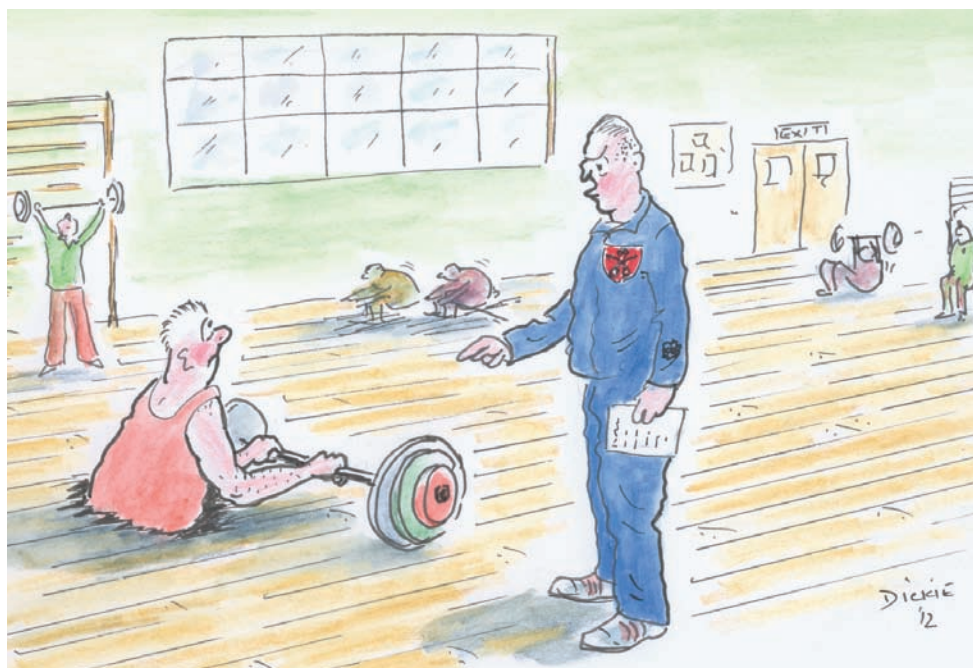
ARMY



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"How did I know it would end up in tears Capt Perkins? I told you not to keep adding excess weights!"

● Ranked: Top strength and conditioning tips – pages 38-40

# The strength of Service sports

**T**HIS issue celebrates the diverse role that sport and fitness plays in the lives of British Army personnel.

As the edition went to press, cover star Pte Jack Marshman (3 Para) was preparing to face the toughest test of his mixed martial arts career against middleweight champion Tom Watson (page 90).

"I'm rated as the outsider for this bout but that is only because I'm younger and less experienced," the ambitious athlete told sports editor Richard Long.

Those lacking enthusiasm for combat sport disciplines – or engaged in the daily toil of Op Herrick 16 – may consider the outcome of Pte Marshman's battle to be somewhat irrelevant to the stresses and strains of wider Service life.

But his determination to escape his position as underdog appears to reveal some pretty profound truths about soldiers' mentality in the face of tough competition – attitudes that reverberate far beyond the action of the ring.

Whether battling to overcome a recent injury on the Alpine slopes (pages 43-45), chasing a 2012 dream (pages 88-89) or dodging bullets to help a colleague on the front line of Helmand province (pages 27-30), Servicemen and women's relentless optimism in taking on seemingly insurmountable challenges is enough to leave civvy onlookers stunned.

Committed workouts help to give troops a physical edge when it comes to operations (pages 38-40) – but what is it about sport that feeds your mental resolve so well?

The latest round of operational honours and awards for the heroic feats of Operation Herrick 14 demonstrates the impressive extent of such boldness. As ever, the stories emerging from this

list (page 30) make for some pretty unbelievable reading – certainly among the *Soldier* team but no doubt with personnel too.

In addition to the physical strength that allowed the likes of Cpl Carl Taylor (3 Mercian) to sprint to the miraculous rescue of a child, a common attribute of the honour-winners seemed to be their reluctance to fully reflect on the significant danger they were in until after their brave act had occurred.

Something between anger and determination had spurred them on to put a situation right, no matter what the risk to themselves.

A lightning dash through enemy fire, putting the injuries of comrades before your own, dismantling bombs without protective equipment: these are

the real tests of a soldier's stamina – and in each case physical fitness is only a chapter of the success story.

So it seems I am no further in understanding the intricacies of a truly determined warrior's mindset, though I am sure many a brilliant study has been written on the subject.

I would be interested to read them and for readers to shed some light on this intriguing matter for me.

After such a difficult month in Helmand (page 7), it seems appropriate to unite battlefield and recreational triumphs in one issue.

Together, they show how that the real strength of this organisation is something below the surface, something ingrained and certainly something the Taliban's deadly improved explosive devices will never destroy.

Finally, this month marks 30 years since the start of the Falklands conflict. I hope you relish reading the accounts from our veterans as much as I did. – Sarah Goldthorpe, Editor ■

**'After such a difficult month in Helmand province, it seems appropriate to unite battlefield and recreational triumphs'**





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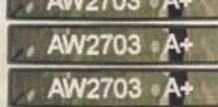
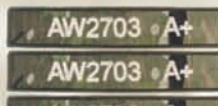
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# THE informer...

BRITISH TROOPS' GLOBAL INTELLIGENCE ASSET

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Picture: Steve Dock

**Walking away not an option:** Philip Hammond and Chief of the Defence Staff Gen Sir David Richards (centre left) say Operation Herrick must continue

## Leaders stress mission motivation

**O**PERATIONS in Afghanistan will continue in earnest despite a difficult month in the country, defence chiefs have said.

Six British soldiers were killed in the Lashkar Gah Durai region on March 6 when their Warrior armoured vehicle was struck by an improvised explosive device (page 19).

It marks the largest loss of life for the Army in a single incident since the conflict began a decade ago.

Days later an American soldier shot dead 16 Afghan civilians in an attack the country's president Hamid Karzai called "unforgivable".

In a statement, Defence Minister Philip Hammond said: "The shocking loss of British lives – the worst for many years – understandably raises questions about the continued presence of UK forces in Afghanistan; about why we are there and what we are achieving.

"I am clear about the answers to those questions: the mission is necessary for national security.

"Our troops, and those from 49 additional nations, are preventing the country again being used by al-Qaeda

and other terrorists as a base to plan attacks against us and our allies.

"We are fighting there to prevent them attacking us here.

"Our national security requires us to see the job through and we owe it to the all too many who have lost their lives to see this mission successfully concluded.

"Walking away is not an option."

In a separate article on the Ministry of Defence website, Chief of the Defence Staff Gen Sir David Richards commented: "The progress we have made is truly impressive.

"The Afghan National Security Forces are barely nine years old – that's an army and police institution formed in about the same time as it takes to train the company commanders who are now leading so many operations in Helmand province.

"The results are also clear; the number of complex attacks – the kind of incidents that require planning and sophisticated understanding of tactics – are dropping across the country.

"Sadly, as we hold that course it is likely that others will lose loved ones.

"It is right that we take these

moments to remember not only the fallen but that the families of the injured and killed are the ones who pay the enduring price of our security."

Writing in *The Sun*, Chief of the General Staff Gen Sir Peter Wall explained that success on Operation Herrick was "within grasp".

"The past week has been a tough one for the British Army," he conceded.

"But our determination to play our part in securing the lives of the Afghan people and their future is as strong as ever. Our soldiers are making a huge difference there."


At a joint press conference with American president Barack Obama at the White House, David Cameron explained how the mission was moving into its "final phases".

"We will not build a perfect Afghanistan although, let's be clear, we are making tangible progress," he said.

By mid-2013 the country's troops are expected to be leading on security provision nationwide with support from the International Security Assistance Force. British troops will end their combat role in 2014.



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## NEWS IN BRIEF

### INJURY INFORMATION

■ A NEW guide has been published to help the families of wounded, injured and sick soldiers learn more about the rehabilitation process.

The document emphasises the importance of creating and developing individual recovery plans, the benefits of personnel recovery units and highlights the wider sources of support that are available.

It can be downloaded from the Army Recovery Capability intranet site.

### COLOSSAL CROSSOVER

■ ONE of the biggest bridges to be built by British soldiers since the Second World War has been completed in Afghanistan.

Around 40 members of 35 Engineer Regiment laid the 140-tonne, 67-metre structure across the Nahr-e Bughra canal in Helmand province to connect two nearby communities.

It is estimated that the last time a comparable construction was erected was in Burma during 1945.

“The lads have worked really well on this,” said Lt Glynn Tomsett, officer in charge of the project.

### JUBILEE JUBILATION

■ ARMED Forces personnel will mount a special parade and muster at Windsor next month in honour of the Queen’s 60-year reign, it has been announced by the Ministry of Defence.

Nearly 2,500 troops from across the three Services will take part on May 19.



Picture: Steve Dock

**Eyes on the prize:** Pte Charlie Morris-Cook (R Anglian) perfects his rifle drills ahead of deployment

## Op Herrick 16 gets under way

PERSONNEL from 12th Mechanized Brigade will deploy to Helmand province this month on Operation Herrick 16.

The unit takes over from 20th Armoured Brigade as the lead formation of the mission, with its troops braced to further prepare local forces for taking charge of security.

Brig Doug Chalmers, incoming commander of Task Force Helmand, said: “On this tour our job is predominately about enabling the Afghan National Security Forces.”

The senior officer explained that although Servicemen and women under his command had prepared extensively, nothing could replicate the real thing.

“What we cannot emulate is the Afghan our troops will work with. He is a person, an individual and we must understand what he can and can’t do.

“That relationship is the next step we have got to go through,” Brig Chalmers said. “The local population like to see the ANSF engaging with them. The more they see us supporting them, the more I feel they know we are stepping away but not running away.”

Defence Secretary Philip Hammond added: “We are successfully transferring responsibility to local forces.

“Our job is to make sure that as we prepare for drawdown, they are able to continue to deny use of the country to international terrorists.”

## Pay awards announced

**S**OLDIERS earning £21,000 or less are to receive a £250 increase in their wage as part of terms set out in the latest pay awards.

The figure matches the 2011 sum, with incremental salary progression also being retained for the forthcoming year.

Changes have been announced to the qualifying interval between each of the 14 levels for Longer Separation Allowance.

The timescale has dropped from 240 days to 180 and payment rates for each will range from £6.69 to £28.24.

However, there will be increases in the dining and accommodation charges paid by Servicemen and women.

The Daily Food Charge will rise by 21 pence, making the new rate £4.46.

The Entitled Casual Meal and Pay As You Dine core meal charges will be set at £4.56 per day.

Rates for Service Families and Single Living Accommodation will increase by up to 2.9 per cent.

In a message to personnel, Chief of the General Staff Gen Sir Peter Wall said: “As we enter the second year of the public

sector pay freeze, the Army continues to play its part in reducing the national deficit and the pay award should be seen in this context.

“The Armed Forces’ Pay Review Body has recommended increases in food and accommodation charges and this reflects a continued increase in costs faced by wider society.

“As for last year, rental increases are graduated so those in lower grade accommodation will see minimal rises in their charges.

“I am pleased the government has agreed the final stage of enhancements to the Longer Separation Allowance.

“By reducing the qualifying interval between each of the current levels, it better reflects the length of a typical operational deployment.”

He added: “We continue to monitor pay allowances closely to ensure that, as far as possible, they keep pace with your unique and outstanding commitment to the country.”

Full details of the 2012 pay awards can be found in ABN 19/12.

### 2012 PACKAGE IN NUMBERS

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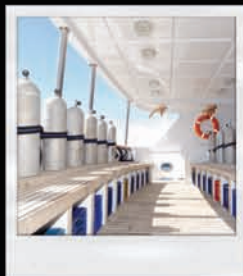
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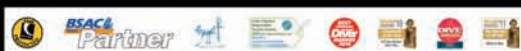
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## NEWS IN BRIEF

### REJOIN PROCESS REVISED

■ THE system for serving and recently discharged Regular personnel to join the Territorial Army has been revamped to make it simpler and quicker.

A new form enables troops to get an early offer while still employed as a full-timer.

Changes to the selection criteria mean serving soldiers will have their medical status confirmed by their Regular units while termination medicals for former personnel will remain valid for a period of 12 months.

For more information on the new process read DIN number 2012DIN01-018.

### FESTIVAL FUN FOR FORCES

■ A FORMER gunner has added a new date to the British music festival diary.

Tony Chadwick, who served with 29 Commando Regiment, Royal Artillery, has set up GreenZone – an outdoor event specifically for military personnel.

Held in the grounds of Loughborough's Prestwold Hall between June 29 to July 3, the weekend line-up will include Reverend and the Makers and the Sunshine Underground.

"I have started this because, apart from the tours, the best part of military life for me was the social side," the event director explained.

"Squaddies are a different breed and I think it would be amazing to have thousands of them together enjoying themselves.

"There is nothing like GreenZone out there, all other events are more like showcases aimed at portraying the military in a good light.

"With this, we simply want to give soldiers a place to come together and let their hair down."

As well as impressive music, the festival will feature live comedy acts and the final stage of a battle of the bands competition.

It is open to all serving members of the Armed Forces, veterans and their civilian friends, partners or supporters.

Weekend passes cost £120 including camping and a limited amount of early bird tickets are available for £50 at [www.greenzonefestival.com](http://www.greenzonefestival.com)



### OSBORNE'S BUDGET BOOST

■ AN extra £100 million will be invested in Service accommodation next year, George Osborne has announced.

Other more immediate measures outlined in the chancellor's budget speech as *Soldier* was going to press included the doubling of the families welfare grant and of council tax relief for deployed personnel, both of which will come into effect this month.

The Ministry of Defence said the changes demonstrated the government's commitment to honouring the military covenant.



Pictures: Cpl Obi Igboedisiokwu, RLC

**Cross-Channel cooperation:** Troops from both sides of the water were tested during Ex Gaulish Eagle

## Paras perfect urban skills

**B**RITISH and French troops have spent a fortnight training together to improve their urban fighting skills and develop cooperation between the two armies.

Soldiers from A Company, 3rd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment descended on the Centre d'Entraînement aux Actions en Zone Urbaine (CENZUB) in north east France for Exercise Gaulish Eagle.

The serial saw them work with members of the French Airborne Cavalry to prepare for their role within the Airborne Task Force as part of 16 Air Assault Brigade.

UK personnel performed drills with the Giat Famas assault rifle, the standard weapon of the French Army, and learnt the European country's tactics for working with Leclerc main battle tanks.

The package culminated in a field exercise where troops worked together to attack and defend CENZUB's two purpose-built training towns, Beausejour and Jeoffrecourt.

Maj Richard Todd, officer commanding A Company, explained: "As the Airborne Task Force, this battalion is on standby to go anywhere in the world to do anything from disaster relief to war fighting.

"On such operations it is likely that we will be working alongside other armies in an urban environment so this training has been excellent preparation for us.

"The exercise has also served to strengthen relationships and understanding with our French allies.

"We've used their kit and tactics, and working with the tanks has been an enjoyable challenge."

Pte Dave Cheshire said: "This has been a tough package because it's been so different.

"As paratroopers we're not used to working with tanks, so that has been something new."

Pte Damien Miles added: "Communicating with the French troops has been quite demanding at times but we got by with a few words of the language and lots of hand signals and sketch maps."

The exercise follows the signing of a defence and security cooperation treaty by David Cameron and French president Nicolas Sarkozy during November 2010.

While overseas the UK personnel also enjoyed a day in Paris, visiting the Eiffel Tower and the Louvre Museum.

● Under pressure, pages 36-37



■ Tactics were shared between France and the UK during the challenging two-week serial



■ Soldiers learnt more about their European colleagues' use of the Leclerc main battle tank



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## NEWS IN BRIEF

### TROOPS TAKE ON TORCH TASK

■ BRITISH Army personnel will be among the 7,300 individuals helping to deliver the Olympic torch to London for the 2012 Games this summer, the event's organisers have confirmed.

A number of soldiers have been selected to carry the famous flame on its 8,000-mile tour of the UK ahead of the opening ceremony on July 27.

Maj Fiona Grist (QARANC) will take up torchbearing duty on a section of the route between Reading and Oxford.

The matron at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst's medical facility said the news was “completely unexpected” but that she was “ecstatic” to have been chosen.

Seb Coe, chairman of the Games' organising committee, added: “The flame symbolises the Olympic spirit and its journey around the UK will bring the excitement of the event to our streets.

“Now people know the route it will be carried along, and who is running in which community, they can start planning in detail how they will celebrate the torch coming to them and truly make it their moment to shine.”

An online map available at [www.london2012.com](http://www.london2012.com) gives street-by-street details of the exact path the iconic flame will take through more than 1,000 communities in the UK.

The site also reveals others given the honour of carrying it.

The relay is just one part of the Armed Forces contribution to London 2012. At the time of going to press, Exercise Taurus Mountain 3 was set to put airmen, soldiers and sailors through their paces in the skies over North Yorkshire.

The serial, designed to test the ability of different aircraft to work together to provide security, featured RAF Pumas, Royal Navy and Army Lynx helicopters and airborne surveillance platforms including Sea Kings and the Royal Air Force's E-3D Sentry.

On the ground, Army personnel practised operating air observer and missile systems.

● Beighton braced for Games push  
— pages 88-89



**Bitter taste:** Changes in defence dining are likely to be greeted with mixed reviews from Army personnel

## Come dine with us, say chiefs

THE officers' mess – long regarded as a sanctuary for the senior ranks – is set to become a regular venue for junior personnel following a shake-up of defence dining.

In a move to engender greater empathy between commanders and their troops, private soldiers will be presented with Service “season tickets” that will grant them access to top-tier messing facilities once a fortnight.

The passes, due to be distributed this month, herald an end to the British Army's long-standing tradition of personnel only being welcomed in the mess equivalent of their rank.

While some regiments choose to give senior NCOs a flavour of the officers' mess during exchange evenings – typically over the Christmas period – soldiers have never previously featured on the guest list.

As visitors, junior ranks will be expected to “behave in a manner appropriate to their surroundings” but will be exempt from having to wear formal attire.

In recognition of the austere economic climate, the guests will be subsidised by mess members, allowing them to eat alongside their superiors at no personal cost and enjoy up to six measures of free brandy or port.

Regulations governing access to the

warrant officers and sergeants' mess remain unaffected, with chiefs ruling the Army's middle managers already have a firm knowledge of those above and below them in the chain of command.

Maj Simon Greggs, the officer spearheading the policy change, said: “These new arrangements will help to challenge prejudices that exist in both groups. Whether a captain or a craftsman, we all wear the same uniform and are not the vastly different species stereotypes would have us believe. If we can engender mutual appreciation between ranks then the mess passport has got to be a good thing.”

The officer added: “It will also challenge the barrack room myths of mess games, horseplay and irreverence.

“But if nothing else, we hope a glimpse of commanders at ease will encourage more soldiers to strive for a permanent slice of life in the mess.”

While the MoD insisted the changes were in the interests of “Service cohesion”, a spokesperson conceded they would also ensure adherence to the latest European legislation.

“Tradition is not a defence in the eyes of the Human Rights Commission,” he explained. “It is no longer deemed appropriate to deny personnel freedom of movement on camp or restrict access to eating and drinking establishments.”



## App helps officers learn the lingo

A NEW smartphone application is set to help British Army personnel communicate with Afghans during the final stages of Op Herrick.

Some 250 officers arrived in Helmand last month equipped with iPod Touch devices containing a programme called Alelo, which assists users with foreign language pronunciation, cultural awareness, verbal and non-verbal gestures and etiquette.

The aid has versions for Dari and Pashto –

the two official languages of Afghanistan – and is part of a mobile learning initiative from the Educational and Training Services team.

“This launch signifies a major leap forward in how we are able to support soldiers deploying,” said Maj Graham Martin (AGC (ETS)), the officer overseeing the programme.

The trial is the first time that Apple Wi-Fi technology has been approved for use on such a large scale in theatre.



Picture: Steve Dock



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## NEWS IN BRIEF

### SOLDIER SHRUGS OFF SHOT

■ A SERVICEMAN who was shot in the back during a firefight in Helmand province has been praised for continuing his mission regardless.

Tpr Daniel Griffiths (QDG) was struck by insurgents while undertaking a two-day operation to disrupt the laying of improvised explosive devices on the edge of Nad-e Ali district.

A bullet went through his daysack and into the back plate behind it, but instead of seeking help the 23-year-old swapped his damaged armour and carried on.

“I felt a bit nervous but I knew I was alright with the rest of my section behind me and a new plate in,” the soldier explained.

Maj Justin Stenhouse, officer commanding the Brigade Reconnaissance Force, said: “Tpr Griffiths is yet another example of the true bravery and determination displayed day to day by soldiers operating in Afghanistan.”

### SERVICE RADIO REMINDER

■ TROOPS are being urged to tune in to Armed Forces radio stations for up-to-date information about events across the Service.

Garrison FM and BFBS are available at British Army bases across the world, through the internet or by downloading the broadcasters’ free mobile phone applications.

■ **THOSE** who solved last month’s spine lines competition are likely to have been impressed by the skills on show from British Army logisticians.

(Lt Dex) Bransby, (Lt Col Tim) Blackmore, (Pte Nar) Gurung and (Maj Edward) Osborne were all quoted in a feature about the transformation of 1 Transport Squadron, 10 The Queen’s Own Gurkha Logistic Regiment ahead of deployment to Afghanistan.

This month we have an **Orbitsound T12v3 Soundbar** to give away.

Available from [www.johnlewis.com](http://www.johnlewis.com) for £299, this impressive kit brings surround sound to your sofa with a spatial technology that eliminates the need for multiple speakers. It also includes a built-in iPod and iPhone dock.

To be in with a chance of winning, tell us what links the words on the side of this issue. Answers to our new address or [comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk](mailto:comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk) by April 30.



Picture: Sgt Rupert Freese, RLC

**Independent:** Soldiers from 16 Medical Regiment deliver a simulated casualty to a resuscitation suite

# Medics pushed to the limit

**M**EMBERS of 16 Medical Regiment have put their skills and drills under the spotlight during a tough training serial in York.

Exercise Serpent’s Anvil saw the specialists practise life-saving treatments in the challenging conditions they could one day face on missions alongside the Army’s Airborne Task Force.

A field hospital – including a resuscitation suite, operating theatre and intensive care ward – was set up to care for simulated casualties.

Kit including a portable digital X-ray machine and handheld diagnostic scanner was also put through its paces.

“This training has tested our ability to work light, fast and on our own,” explained Lt Col Steven Tracey, commanding officer of 16 Med Regt.

“We offer a unique capability within the British military – not just the Army – of being able to deploy a surgical team by parachute.

“To be able for this role, we have to move away from our recent experiences in Afghanistan and the safety net of having what is probably the best trauma hospital in the world a quick helicopter

ride away,” he added.

“We could find ourselves operating – in all sense of the word – in conditions that are hostile not just in terms of fighting but with limited access to transport and medical resources and challenging environmental factors such as poor sanitation and the prevalence of tropical disease.

“This requires our medics to develop a different mindset.”

The formation provides role two support to 16 Air Assault Brigade personnel, offering consultant-led emergency treatment and primary health care.

Specialists in the regiment include consultant orthopaedic surgeons, biomedical scientists and combat medical technicians.

Lt Col Paul Parker, a senior surgeon with the unit, said: “This is a very flexible and hands-on facility.

“On operations we will be working in austere situations and the exercise is as realistic as it can be made.

“We only use the supplies we would be able to deploy with and treat our casualties in real time.”

# Online exchange to aid explorers

SOLDIERS are being invited to join a new social networking website that links adventurers and trekkers around the world.

The Explorers Connect forum ([www.explorersconnect.com](http://www.explorersconnect.com)) enables visitors to share information, recruit teammates, review and recommend equipment and follow the progress of international expeditions.

It is open to any enthusiasts from

amateurs to professionals and among those promoting the free portal are the celebrated adventurers Sir Ranulph Fiennes and Bear Grylls.

“This website is about sharing skills, knowledge and resources with like-minded folk,” commented Grylls.

The platform has already attracted more than 3,000 members since it was set up by rowing world record holder Berlinda Kirk.





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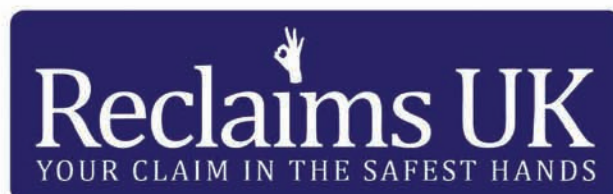
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Picture: Sgt Wes Calder, RL C

**Onwards together:** Part-time members of 5 Rifles mixed well with their Regular colleagues during Op Herrick 15 while displaying a range of other skills

## Troops praised for 'seamless' integration

A COMMANDING officer has praised the skills demonstrated by Territorial Army soldiers during Operation Herrick 15.

Lt Col Tom Copinger-Symes said Reservists had "integrated seamlessly" into the battlegroup of 5th Battalion, The Rifles, which was responsible for the Nahr-e Saraj (South) area of operations during the last tour.

He added: "What we get from them are not only excellent core infantry skills but also a wide range of other talents – from the artisan to the academic."

A group of 54 part-time riflemen joined the unit last June and have worked alongside their Regular counterparts during training, while on patrol and as searches were conducted for improvised explosive devices in southern Afghanistan.

The senior officer said their specialisms from the civilian world had proved particularly useful at checkpoints – with handymen, carpenters and electricians all stepping up.

"In these types of full-spectrum operations we need people who can think as well as fight; riflemen who are comfortable with complexity and have a thirst for innovation," Lt Col Copinger-Symes said.

"But when the going gets tough they have also excelled in the hard, gritty fighting that typifies this particular operational theatre."

Maj Matt Baker, officer commanding D Company, said TA soldiers had demonstrated their range of capabilities on the tour.

"They have been superb, proving themselves the equal of their Regular

comrades and clearly enjoying being at the sharp end of operations," he explained. "I have been delighted to have them under my command."

LCpl Chris Corby, a Reservist in D Company, commented:

"The tempo of exercises before deployment, and the fact that troops were on the final serial within days of joining the unit, meant there wasn't time for a divide to grow between Regular and TA riflemen.

"We all got stuck in straight away and this allowed bonds to develop."

**FOR MORE  
TA NEWS**  
Log onto [ArmyNet](http://ArmyNet), visit  
[www.army.mod.uk](http://www.army.mod.uk) or  
follow the Territorial and  
Reserves link on the  
intranet

## Top soldier signals change

MORE must be done to support Reservists and their families during operations, the Chief of the General Staff has said.

In an article for *The Times*, Gen Sir Peter Wall also explained how part-time soldiers are becoming more vital to the Service.

He revealed a series of pilot schemes to ensure the Army delivers increasingly capable "citizen soldiers" and said extra investment would be made accordingly in both combat skills training and tailored officer courses at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst.

"Since April 2001 the British Army has deployed more than

27,000 Reservists on operations in Iraq, Cyprus and Afghanistan," the senior officer added.

"This remarkable group of people has served with distinction and it has made a real difference."

In the article, Gen Sir Wall described Military Cross winner Kgn Michael Davison and Lt Col Sharon Stewart, a recent recipient of the Associate Royal Red Cross, as "typical" of those within the Territorial Army. He said such personnel would play "an even more important" role in future.



### NEWS IN BRIEF

#### INTELLIGENCE ADDITION

■ A NEW detachment of 3 Military Intelligence Battalion (Volunteers) has been established in Cosham near Portsmouth.

The unit is part of 33 Military Intelligence Company and has been located in Hampshire to be closer to sponsor units on the south coast.

Set up for two full sections, the group is now looking for high-quality NCOs – particularly juniors – to join its ranks.

No prior Regular service is necessary but transfers are welcome.

Applicants should be aged 18 to 32 and have five GCSEs including English and maths.

For more information about the opportunity contact Capt Colin Scott on 0207 611 3912 or email [3MI-ROSO@mod.uk](mailto:3MI-ROSO@mod.uk)



# 30 years on, Veterans are still fighting for peace

On the 14<sup>th</sup> of June this year it will have been 30 years since the Falklands War ended. But for many Falklands Veterans, the battle still rages in their minds.

Combat Stress is the leading UK charity specialising in the care of Veterans' mental ill health. We are supporting over 200 Veterans who served in the Falklands War and who, 30 years on, are still suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, anxiety, paranoia or depression from what they endured in battle.

**We know there are hundreds more out there who need our help.**



## Darren's story

Darren Horsnell joined the 4th Field Regt, Royal Artillery at sixteen and was nineteen in 1982 when they were deployed to the Falklands. Here he bravely shares some of his experiences to explain why treatment is so vital.

'I saw the Argentinean jets coming down bomb alley and opening fire on our ships, dropping their bombs. A feeling of uselessness came over me. Our men were sitting targets. We were firing small arms at the airplanes and I remember screaming at them, "Leave them alone!" I still wake up screaming.

Later I was injured and evacuated to the field hospital. While they were operating on my right calf, I could see the body of a guy in the next bed who had had his back blown out. I used to dream about this guy and in the dream he'd turn around and start talking.

When I came home I didn't tell anybody that I was having nightmares, or flashbacks. But all that was sinking deeper and deeper into me, and obviously it was getting harder to

hide. But I was in denial. It was everyone around me who had the problem, not me.

It was nearly 14 years before I got any help. My [then] wife forced me to go and see my GP, who told me about Combat Stress. They assessed me and diagnosed me with PTSD.

One day, the Activities Centre Manager said to me, "Why don't you try some art therapy?" When I was painting it took all the bad memories away. I am now teaching other Veterans to paint. It is a great form of therapy.

I also do Cognitive Behavioural Therapy at Combat Stress, once a month. And I am on a health management course too. I can honestly say Combat Stress saved my life. Without them I don't think I would be here today.

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## IN MEMORIAM



**SGT NIGEL COUPE (33)**  
1ST BATTALION, THE DUKE OF  
LANCASTER'S REGIMENT  
KIA MARCH 6 – AFGHANISTAN

MEMBERS of 1st Battalion, The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment are mourning the loss of an outstanding colleague who was killed while on patrol in Afghanistan.

Sgt Nigel Coupe was travelling with five soldiers from 3rd Battalion, The Yorkshire Regiment when an improvised explosive device struck their Warrior armoured vehicle, killing all six personnel.

The 33-year-old joined the Army in 1996 and completed a tour as an instructor at the Driving and Maintenance School in Bovington before his latest deployment.

Once attached to 3 Yorks he became an integral part of 7 Platoon and Corunna Company, where his expertise proved vital

in helping to prepare troops for the various challenges of operations.

"Professional, courageous and utterly dedicated to his job, Sgt Coupe was highly-regarded by all who worked with him," said Lt Col Nicholas Wood, CO of 1 Lincs.

"Those who had the pleasure to spend time with him, whether in the back of his Warrior, in the mess or out in the field, were touched by his humour, kindness and willingness to help."

Sgt Coupe leaves behind wife Natalie, children Ella and Jasmine, parents Elaine and Alan and sister Linda.

A family statement said: "He dedicated almost 17 years of his life to the Army and we are immensely proud of all that he achieved."



**CPL JAKE HARTLEY (20)**  
3RD BATTALION,  
THE YORKSHIRE REGIMENT  
KIA MARCH 6 – AFGHANISTAN

A MOTIVATED and selfless Serviceman has been described as "the ultimate infantry soldier" in tributes following his death.

Cpl Jake Hartley was one of five men from 3rd Battalion, The Yorkshire Regiment to be killed in an IED attack on their Warrior vehicle.

The 20-year-old joined his unit in December 2008 when his potential was immediately recognised and he was promoted well ahead of his years.

"Cpl Hartley's rise through the ranks had been swift and rightly so," said Lt Col Zac Stenning, commanding officer of 3 Yorks.

"He was a natural leader as exemplified by his top position on the gruelling infantry section commanders' battle course.

"He was a future star; regimental sergeant major material for sure."

Sgt Stewart Watts (3 Yorks) added: "Cpl Hartley wasn't just a soldier to me, he was a good mate, someone I could trust with anything.

"He was just one of those lads that brought morale anywhere he went.

"He was an absolutely fantastic young man in all areas of life and was also my best ever section commander."

The soldier leaves behind his mother, stepfather, brother and uncle.

A family statement said: "Jake was always in the limelight and a larger-than-life character.

"He loved Army life and was very determined to do well and achieve his goals."



**PTE ANTHONY FRAMPTON (20)**  
3RD BATTALION,  
THE YORKSHIRE REGIMENT  
KIA MARCH 6 – AFGHANISTAN

TROOPS from 3rd Battalion, The Yorkshire Regiment are mourning the loss of Pte Anthony Frampton after he was killed in last month's Warrior attack in Afghanistan.

The 20-year-old from Huddersfield began his Army career in January 2009 before passing out of training several months later and joining the Warminster-based unit.

Initially employed in Alma Company as a rifleman, he completed the Drums Course in Catterick before demonstrating his fit and robust character as part of Somme Company.

Lt Col Zac Stenning, commanding officer of 3 Yorks, said: "Pte Frampton was a unique young man.

"Fit, carefree and always the life and soul of

his platoon, he was a legend amongst his peers.

"He was a thoroughly likeable person and could motivate and encourage the entire battalion with his cheekiness and smile."

The Serviceman leaves behind his mother, father, stepfather and sisters.

A statement from his family said: "Anton was the life and soul of every party and always lived to the full.

"He had a great sense of humour and made everybody laugh with his crazy dancing and karaoke singing.

"He was a fantastic soldier, winning the Soldiers' Soldier Award in training, and loved being in the Army. We are so proud of him and all that he achieved."



**PTE CHRISTOPHER KERSHAW (19)**  
3RD BATTALION,  
THE YORKSHIRE REGIMENT  
KIA MARCH 6 – AFGHANISTAN

A TEENAGER who always dreamed of serving with the British Army has been described as "a true Yorkshire warrior".

Pte Christopher Kershaw of 3rd Battalion, The Yorkshire Regiment was one of those killed last month when an IED struck an armoured vehicle.

The 19-year-old from Bradford was put on a Warrior driving cadre as soon as he joined his battalion in September 2011.

He was also recognised as an extremely effective light machine-gun operator and was selected to fill the role on operations soon after.

Lt Col Zac Stenning, commanding officer of 3 Yorks, said: "Pte Christopher Kershaw was a fiercely fit young man who thrived on soldiering.

"His natural love of the outdoors shone

through in his personal and professional life.

"Given this passion and his continuous desire to educate himself, he already stood out amongst his peers as a corporal of the future.

"We have lost a true Yorkshire warrior."

Maj Edward Colver, officer commanding Corunna Company, added: "He showed immediate promise and regularly briefed me on his ambition to be a section commander and complete a junior non-commissioned officers' cadre as soon as possible. This typified his approach to military life: outgoing and aspiring."

Pte Kershaw leaves behind his parents and sister. His mother said: "Chris loved anything to do with the Army from the age of five.

"He lived the dream until the end."



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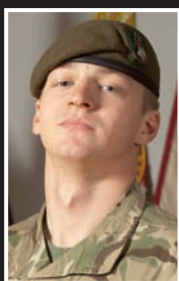
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## IN MEMORIAM



PTE DANIEL WADE (20)  
3RD BATTALION,  
THE YORKSHIRE REGIMENT  
KIA MARCH 6 – AFGHANISTAN

MEMBERS of 3rd Battalion, The Yorkshire Regiment are mourning the loss of a promising young soldier after he was killed in an explosion in Helmand province.

Pte Daniel Wade was travelling with members of his unit when an improvised explosive device struck their Warrior armoured vehicle on the border of Kandahar province.

The 20-year-old joined the Army last year and was immediately placed on a Warrior driving cadre on entering the battalion.

He soon established himself as one of the best drivers in Corunna Company.

Lt Col Zac Stenning, commanding officer of 3 Yorks, said: "Dan arrived keen and energetic and in only a very short period of time had made a

real mark within his company.

"Quiet and unassuming, he was very committed in all that he did.

"We have lost a young man who had so much to give in his life."

The soldier leaves behind his mother, sister and fiancée with whom he was expecting a baby girl called Lexie.

WO2 Eric Whitehouse, company sergeant major, added: "Pte Wade was a quality soldier; reliable, honest and hardworking.

"He was a family-orientated man who cared greatly for his girlfriend and talked warmly of looking forward to seeing his unborn child at the end of the tour; a devoted person with emotional depth and clear intelligence."



PTE DANIEL WILFORD (21)  
3RD BATTALION,  
THE YORKSHIRE REGIMENT  
KIA MARCH 6 – AFGHANISTAN

A POPULAR Warrior gunner has died while on operations in Afghanistan.

Pte Daniel Wilford was from Huddersfield and joined 3rd Battalion, The Yorkshire Regiment in April 2010.

He deployed to Afghanistan with Corunna Company in February 2012 where he had already proved to have a thorough knowledge of the armoured vehicle and its weapon systems.

Lt Col Zac Stenning, commanding officer of 3 Yorks, said: "Pte Wilford was the archetypal Yorkshire infantry soldier; quiet, unassuming but with bags of character.

"He was unique, happy-go-lucky and confident; his smile could light up a room.

"A thoroughly honest and dedicated

infantryman, his friends and colleagues trusted and respected him."

Away from military life, the Serviceman's hobbies included playing golf and darts.

Maj Edward Colver, officer commanding Corunna Company, added that he was being considered as a potential junior NCO.

"It was often noted how proficient he was in the turret and his calmness put many a commander to shame," the officer recalled.

"He was hugely popular amongst the lads and will be sorely missed by Corunna Company, his comrades and friends."

Pte Wilford leaves behind his mother, stepfather, brother and grandparents. A family statement said he was always "full of energy".

## Serviceman's surprise Victoria Cross sacrifice

**T**HE country's only living recipient of the Victoria Cross has stunned charity chiefs by selling off one of his two replica decorations to raise £12,000 for their organisation.

LCpl Johnson Beharry (PWRR) made the surprise donation to the ForceSelect Foundation, the charitable branch of a recruitment agency for Service leavers, during a dinner for veterans in London.

The award was sold to a philanthropist present at the event.

The soldier was presented with the honour in 2005 after braving intense fire to save dozens of colleagues in Iraq.

But he said he wanted it to benefit charities that support wounded troops.

"I was seriously injured and I know what it's like to be lying in a hospital bed and I appreciated having the help," LCpl Beharry explained.

"When you think about the people who can't walk again, who is going to look after their families? I may be in that position some day.

"I want veterans to know that there are people thinking about their wellbeing.

"They rely on all of us to look after them and without them I would not have

a VC so it's only fair I share it with them."

The Victoria Cross is the highest military honour given for acts of gallantry in the presence of the enemy.

LCpl Beharry's original decoration – estimated to be worth up to £1 million – is held in a secure vault.



Generous gesture: LCpl Johnson Beharry was awarded the military's highest honour in 2005

"The ForceSelect Foundation is honoured that Johnson Beharry chose our event to make such an incredibly generous donation to help military veterans," said the charity's founder Hugh Andree.

"None of us knew about his plan and it just shows how passionately he feels about helping others who have had their lives devastated through injuries while serving their country."

The ForceSelect Foundation raises capital through fund-raising initiatives, corporate and individual donations and a percentage of profits from its sister company to support smaller military charities in financial difficulty.

● SOLDIERS are being urged to ensure the medal ribbons on their parade uniforms adhere to the revised dress policy announced in 2010.

The changes dictated that the width of the material should not exceed that of the breast pocket.

Each complete row of medals must be of the same number as the bottom line and every strip of ribbons must be centred above the breast pocket.





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“CONDITIONS WERE QUITE HORRENDOUS AND WE DIDN'T HAVE SUITABLE FOOTWEAR”

– VETERANS RELIVE FALKLANDS WAR, PAGES 50-51



Pictures: Sgt Wes Calder, RLC

**Fast and fruitful:** Members of the Brigade Reconnaissance Force, led by The Queen's Dragoon Guards, worked alongside Afghan troops during the mission

## Swift weapons seizure angers Taliban chiefs

**A** RAID on an insurgent compound has seen UK and Afghan troops confiscate anti-tank weaponry used to target a British military base.

Members of the Brigade Reconnaissance Force (BRF) conducted the cordon and search in the Nahr-e Saraj district of Helmand province.

Led by The Queen's Dragoon Guards, the group launched a fast-paced, one-hour assault after Taliban members opened fire on the headquarters of 2nd Battalion, The Mercian Regiment.

Among the team's various discoveries was an 82mm recoilless rifle, designed to smash through tank armour.

Intelligence reports later revealed that Taliban chiefs were left furious by the loss of the firearm and shocked at the speed of the attack.

"This was one of the fastest operations that we have ever undertaken

and we were in and out before they had time to react," Capt Mike Gledhill (RE) explained afterwards.

"Denying insurgents the chance to target our boys in the base was hugely satisfying and to get it done with no shots fired was even better."

Surveillance assets operated by members of 2 Mercian had tracked the attackers to the abandoned compound.

Helicopters delivered the joint team to the site ahead of dawn.

British soldiers sealed the area while their Afghan counterparts took control of the break-in.

Inside they discovered a stash left behind by the fleeing enemy. It included rocket-propelled grenades, detonation cord, pressure plates, other improvised explosive device components and seven grenade rounds.

Maj Justin Stenhouse (QDG), officer commanding the BRF, said: "A lot of

people were involved in the generation of this mission; we were just the tip of the spear.

"Hours of hard work by 2 Mercian paid off in what was a great result for the International Security Assistance Force and Afghan troops, and a bad day for the Taliban."

The find came ahead of two further enemy discoveries by members of Helmand's Provincial Response Company.

Supported by The Queen's Royal Hussars, the unit recovered ammunition, rifles and 90kg of opium with a UK street value of more than half a million pounds.



### NEWS IN BRIEF

#### FIRST FEMALE SUMMIT

■ THE first meeting of the Army Women's Network has taken place at the Service headquarters in Andover.

Speakers at the conference included Brig Nicky Moffat, the highest ranked woman in the British Army, and representatives from the private sector.

The group has been established to help the Service deal with issues affecting female soldiers.

#### FIND TO FETCH THOUSANDS

■ A COPY of the original telex announcing the surrender of Argentine forces during the Falklands War will go under the hammer at Bonhams this month.

The artefact, described by the world-famous auction house as being "of great historical importance", is expected to attract bids from around the world and sell for up to £3,000.

#### COMMITTEE COMMENDATION

■ THE House of Commons defence select committee has praised the UK's Armed Forces for their significant contribution to the military campaign in Libya.

A report from the body outlined how thousands of civilian lives were saved by the courage, dedication and professionalism of personnel and the quality of equipment available to them.





THE BIGGER PICTURE

SIX-YEAR-OLD Henry Leeson waves the Union flag as his dad, Sgt Aubrey Leeson (Lancs), marches through Warminster ahead of deployment to Afghanistan with 3rd Battalion, The Yorkshire Regiment last month. The Wiltshire town came to a halt to honour those killed in a massive explosion (pages 19-21) while saluting members of the unit bound for Operation Herrick 16. Picture: Graeme Main









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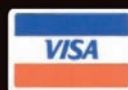
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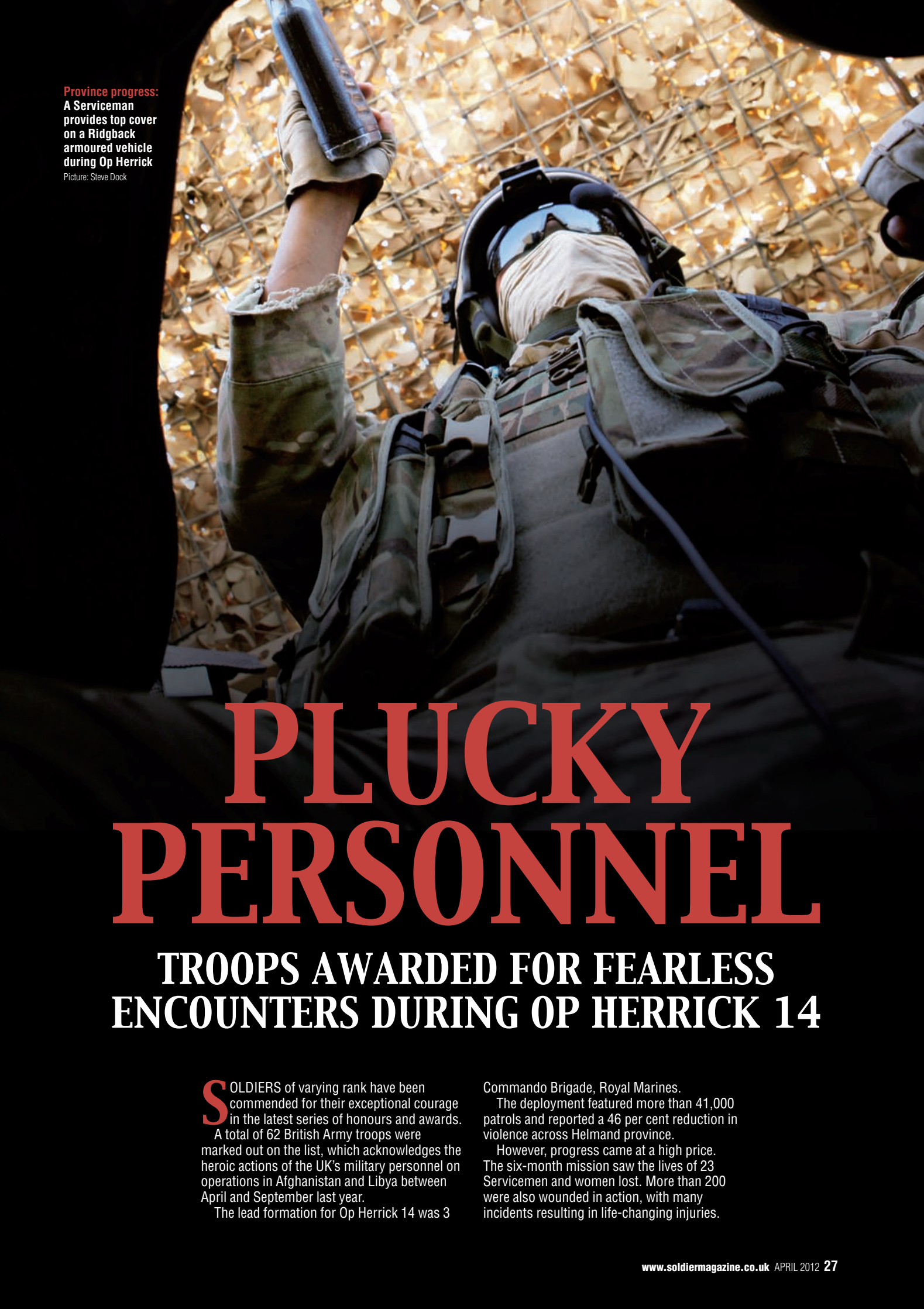
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**Province progress:**  
A Serviceman  
provides top cover  
on a Ridgback  
armoured vehicle  
during Op Herrick

Picture: Steve Dock

# PLUCKY PERSONNEL

## TROOPS AWARDED FOR FEARLESS ENCOUNTERS DURING OP HERRICK 14

**S**OLDIERS of varying rank have been commended for their exceptional courage in the latest series of honours and awards.

A total of 62 British Army troops were marked out on the list, which acknowledges the heroic actions of the UK's military personnel on operations in Afghanistan and Libya between April and September last year.

The lead formation for Op Herrick 14 was 3

Commando Brigade, Royal Marines.

The deployment featured more than 41,000 patrols and reported a 46 per cent reduction in violence across Helmand province.

However, progress came at a high price. The six-month mission saw the lives of 23 Servicemen and women lost. More than 200 were also wounded in action, with many incidents resulting in life-changing injuries.



## GRENADE GALLANTRY

● A SOLDIER who saved the lives of his men by picking up a live grenade and throwing it to safety has been awarded the Conspicuous Gallantry Cross.

The decoration, given for acts of bravery during operations against the enemy, was bestowed on Sjt Deacon Cutterham of 1st Battalion, The Rifles following his first operation in command of an eight-man patrol.

After being promoted in the field that morning, the 28-year-old was leading his team through a steep-sided irrigation ditch when an insurgent threw a grenade from behind a compound wall.

With the lethal explosive just three metres in front of him, Sjt Cutterham had seconds to act.

The courageous NCO ordered his men to take cover then went forward, snatched the weapon from the water and threw it into a neighbouring irrigation ditch where the device exploded harmlessly.

Had he not acted instinctively and with such bravery, it is thought at least himself and the patrol leader would have been killed or injured by the attack.



● Sjt Deacon Cutterham

"I think it was anger that made me do it if I'm honest," the Serviceman explained. "I was annoyed that somebody was trying to take the lives of my men and I.

"I remember putting my hand on it and realising that if I just threw it then it would explode in the air over us, so I had to sort of post the device over the edge of our ditch."

He added: "It's not what I expected on my first day in charge, but you've got to be ready for anything over there and you've got to trust your sixth sense.

"I had a gut feeling when we went out that something was going to happen so I was prepared for it."

The citation calls the soldier's decision to run towards the weapon "phenomenally brave and incredibly selfless".

It also praises his "ice cold clarity of thought and purpose".



## TUNNEL TOIL

● THE endeavours of a 6ft 5in Serviceman who worked in a cramped tunnel for eight hours to deactivate a 50kg bomb have been rewarded with the Queen's Gallantry Medal.

Capt James Fidell, then of 11 EOD Regiment, The Royal Logistic Corps, laboured intensely on an improvised explosive device inside a pitch-black Taliban-dug passageway that was so narrow he could not wear either a bomb disposal suit or helmet and body armour.

Realising the road above the tunnel was a crucial route for Afghans and British forces, he chose to make the device safe instead of destroying it and causing damage to the important highway.

The captain carried out the mission undaunted despite the very real risk of



● Capt James Fidell

him being killed instantly by the bomb or collapse of the earth around him.

The cordon providing his security also came under fire.

"I was quite surprised by just how hot and humid it was in there," said the officer, who conceded it was the most difficult task of his tour.

"But it is very rewarding. Every bomb you disable is potentially saving lives."

Capt Fidell's citation commended the officer's "exceptional gallantry".

"For his exemplary bravery, supreme professionalism and unwavering composure in the most dangerous of circumstances, he is recommended for national recognition," it adds.

The Serviceman is now a member of the Defence EOD Munitions and Search School.



## SKY-HIGH HEROICS

● A FRONT seat aircraft commander who faced off a Libyan ground-to-air missile attack during Op Ellamy has been awarded one of the Army's oldest forms of recognition for gallantry.

WO1 Jonathan Lane of 4 Regiment, Army Air Corps was in one of two Apaches directed to target an enemy command and control centre between Misratah and Zlitan when his gunship was engaged by an SA-24 projectile.

Holding his nerve as it soared towards him, the 37-year-old identified the weapon's firing point before using flares to decoy the missile and return fire.

The Serviceman, who has received a Mention in Dispatches for his actions, conceded that at that moment he feared he would never see his nine-year-old son or wife again.

"It all happened really quickly, probably



● WO1 Jonathan Lane

about five to six seconds, but as I saw the missile heading for us I did think 'this could be it', he said.

"Although I had come under small-arms fire and anti-aircraft artillery attack before, this was the first time I had experienced a surface-to-air missile and, despite going through that scenario in a simulator, it was a real shock.

"The adrenalin was pumping; my heart was thumping out of my chest."

The soldier's actions allowed the helicopters to carry on with their original mission before returning to the firing point to destroy enemy capabilities.

WO1 Lane, of 656 Squadron, has served two tours in Afghanistan and six in Iraq.

On one occasion a bullet flew into the cockpit, through his visor and out of his helmet – miraculously leaving him with just a shrapnel wound.

As a result, this is his second Mention in Dispatches. He has also received a Queen's Commendation for Bravery.

The latest citation praises WO1 Lane's "unwavering professionalism and courage under fire".





## CHILD RESCUE

● A SECTION commander who repeatedly put his life in danger to rescue three Afghan children has been honoured for his bravery.

Cpl Carl Taylor of 3rd Battalion, The Mercian Regiment dashed across open ground under enemy fire four times to save the lives of the terrified youngsters who had been left trapped by insurgent attacks.

His actions have been recognised with the Military Cross.

The incident occurred last March when the Serviceman's company conducted a joint operation with the Afghan National Police to clear an area on a key route used by the Taliban.

The 25-year-old was one of eight personnel who moved to a compound where they encountered two distressed women whose offspring had been stranded by the conflict.

Cpl Taylor sprinted across open terrain to collect them, using his body to shield the infants from the enemy's bullets.

"Their mothers were so upset and they were in such danger that I decided I had to rescue them," the soldier said. "All I could think as I ran was 'be fast'."

Cpl Taylor's citation reads: "In continually exposing himself to enemy fire, he displayed extraordinary gallantry.

"In chancing everything to save the lives of these children, he demonstrated the compassionate face of the International Security Assistance Force."



● Cpl Carl Taylor



## AFGHAN AID

● RISKING his life to save a wounded Afghan soldier has won Cpl Robert King (9/12 L) a Mention in Dispatches.

The 26-year-old, who is based in Germany, ran through enemy fire twice to treat and evacuate the warrior who had been shot in the chest during a patrol in the Yakchal area of Helmand province.

Sprinting 20 metres across open ground to reach the casualty, Cpl King dispensed life-saving first aid.

Unable to use his radio equipment, he then crossed 50 metres to relay details of the casualty's condition to incoming medical professionals.

The Afghan had been shot through the stomach with an exit wound visible on his back. He spent a month in intensive care before being released.

"I didn't know the soldier but, to me, not going to him would have been wrong," Cpl King said.

"We had been living and fighting with local forces for two months at that point.

"They were leading that particular patrol, but we were there for them if they needed us."

The Serviceman's citation commends his "exceptional" courage, professionalism and coolness under fire.

It explains: "Cpl King's compassion towards his Afghan partners on that day had a profound impact on them."



● Cpl Robert King



## GURKHA GUTS

● A SERVICEMAN who led the rescue of a severely wounded comrade after being hurt himself has received a Mention in Dispatches.

Cpl Baljit Limbu of The Royal Gurkha Rifles was knocked unconscious when a massive explosion struck his three-man patrol last June.

As the soldier came round, he realised a colleague was barely conscious.

"I remember a big bang and I must have been thrown about 50 metres," recalled the 32-year-old soldier, who was blinded in one eye by insurgent fire on the last day of his six-month tour.

Ignoring his own injuries, Cpl Limbu



● Cpl Baljit Limbu

dragged the casualty to safety and gave him first aid while he waited for help.

Gathering a stretcher party, he then led the group to the helicopter evacuation site.

The incoming aircraft came under fire from insurgents but the soldier ignored the attack until the team was safely aboard before reacting.

Only after the fight was over did he mention his own injuries; blast wounds to his arm and neck and partial deafness.

"I don't fear running around out there, my only concern was how I could save my friends," Cpl Limbu said.

"If you think back now, then yes, it is kind of scary but it's not when you are there and your friend is lying wounded."

The citation states: "Limbu repeatedly displayed exemplary bravery. He consolidated his reputation as a most resilient commander."



Depth of character: Troops on patrol during Operation Herrick 14 last year

Picture: POA (Phot) Dave Husbands, RN



## SELFLESS SHOOTER

● THE Military Cross has been awarded to a soldier who risked his life to save wounded comrades in two separate battles.

Cpl Keith Mitchell, of The Royal Scots Dragoon Guards, was on patrol outside the village of Pupalzay when his section was attacked in a sudden and prolonged ambush from several directions.

Under heavy gunfire, several of his colleagues were injured.

The 29-year-old quickly reacted to divert the incoming rounds by abandoning the safety of cover and heading for open ground so Taliban members could take aim at him instead.

With bullets raining down, the soldier fired three accurate rifle grenades which suppressed the enemy and allowed the wounded men to be evacuated.

"It may be hard to believe but I wasn't even thinking about the incoming fire, I was just concentrating on operating my weapon and then watching the shot to make sure it was accurate," the Serviceman said.

"I didn't see it as putting myself in danger. I was more annoyed at the helplessness as the rounds kept coming."

Cpl Mitchell's citation states that he demonstrated "a pedigree of courage and selflessness".

It adds: "He made a quick and brave decision to put his own life in danger to save the lives of his friends and colleagues.

"His accurate, aggressive and fast reaction whilst being pinned down on two occasions, placing himself in the direct line of enemy fire to draw them away from his wounded colleagues, undoubtedly saved the lives of the injured soldiers and those who were treating them.

"His sustained actions displayed bravery of the very highest order."

## OPERATIONAL HONOURS AND AWARDS

### AFGHANISTAN

#### Commander of the Order of the British Empire

Maj Gen Philip David JONES, late R Anglian.

#### Officer of the Order of the British Empire

Col Alastair James AITKEN, late Scots; A/Brig Lance Spencer Prescott MANS, late PWRR, Maj Henry Lister SEARBY, 9/12 L.

#### Member of the Order of the British Empire

Maj Usman Adewale ALASHE, Para; Maj Wesley John HUGHE, RGR.

#### Bar to DSO

Lt Col James Alexander Delacour DE LA BILLIERE, Rifles.

#### Conspicuous Gallantry Cross

A/Sjt Deacon Daniel CUTTERHAM, Rifles.

#### Military Cross

Bdr Mark David CARPENTER, RA; LCpl Stuart James HOWELL, Rifles; Cpl Keith MITCHELL, Scots DG; LCpl Alexander Luke PERRY, Para; SSgt Jason Alexander STIFF, Para; Cpl Carl TAYLOR, Mercian.

#### Queen's Gallantry Medal

Capt James Peter FIDELL, RLC; A/Sgt James HALPIN, RE.

#### Mention in Dispatches

Capt James Joseph ALDER, RA; Maj Carl William BOSWELL, Rifles; Rfn Willem Hendrik Jacobus DE BEER, Rifles; Lt Mark David Albert DORMON, Rifles; Capt Benjamin David JAMES, Scots; Cpl Robert Mark KING, 9/12 L; Cpl Baljit LIMBU, RGR; Sgt David Paul MOSS, Mercian; LCpl Hayley Teresa RIDGEWAY, RAMC; A/SSgt Nathan RIMMER, Para.

#### Queen's Commendation for Bravery

Spr Adam Andrew BLAKE, RE; LCpl Steven BURLETSON, RE; Rfn Liam Scott ESPIN, Rifles; LCpl Alix James JOHNSON, RE; Cpl Arfon Wyn JONES, RE; Spr Benjamin James MCMURRAY, RE.

#### Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service

LCpl Christopher Roderick BAILEY, Int Corps (V); Maj Mark Simon Peter BERRY, LG; Lt Gen James Jeffrey Corfield BUCKNALL, late Coldm Gds; Lt Col Mark BUDDEN, RE; Sgt Calvin James COULTER, Para; Capt Karl Ashley EASTWOOD, Int Corps; Capt Michael Ian FAWCETT, R Signals; Capt Gail FISHER, RE; Capt Martin HAYES, RLC; LCpl David LAVERY, REME (V); SSgt Michael Anthony LOVELL, REME; Col Charles Rupert PRINCE, late RLC; Capt Michael William George TATTERSALL, Rifles; Lt Col Leigh TINGEY, RE; Maj Neil Kirkby Gow TOMLIN, Scots; Cpl Suzanne WHARTON, Int Corps; Cpl Matthew WHITEHOUSE, Rifles; Maj Benjamin Mark WILDE, Mercian.

### REST OF THE WORLD

#### Commander of the Order of the British Empire

Brig Robert Peter Mark WEIGHILL, late RA.

#### Distinguished Service Order

Maj Gareth Elwyn John HICKS, Para.

#### Military Cross

SSgt Kenny Robert WRIGHT, Para.

#### Distinguished Flying Cross

Capt Neil Michael SIERENS, AAC.

#### Mention in Dispatches

SSgt Russell Craig BYRNE, Para; WO1 Jonathan Nicholas LANE, AAC.

#### Queen's Commendation for Bravery

A/Cpl William Hugh Nelson CRAIG, R Irish.

#### Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service

Capt Nicholas ATKINSON, Para; Brig Simon John MARRINER, late AGC (SPS); Capt Craig John MULVIHILL, Para; Maj Michael John NEVILLE, AAC; Maj Monty Matthew Robert WOOLLEY, 9/12 L.

**Courage and selflessness:**  
Cpl Keith Mitchell (Scots DG) has been awarded the Military Cross for risking his life to save wounded comrades in two separate battles

Pictures: Sgt Russ Nolan, RLC and Steve Dock







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# APPLIED FORCE

## RESERVISTS PUSHED TO PARAMETERS OF FULL-TIME FIGHTERS

Report: Joe Clapson  
Pictures: Graeme Main

**A** FRESH approach to training is ensuring that part-time soldiers are equipped with the same skills as their Regular colleagues when fighting side by side on the front line of Helmand province.

Territorial Army personnel keen to deploy on Op Herrick must now pass through the intensive Afghan Tiger exercise which comprises assessments on basic military drills and live firing.

*Soldier* met the second batch of troops to undertake the course, as instruction on the misty ranges of Warcop training area got under way.

Maj Ben Jesty (Gren Gds), who oversees training at The London Regiment, said the new initiative would better prepare his Reservists for attending the Reinforcements Training and Mobilisation

Centre prior to deployment on operations.

"This is the first time these recruits will have trained to this level," the officer explained at the north Pennines facility.

"By the time they get to the next stage at Chilwell, they will be completely up to speed with all the necessary drills and therefore should not fail."

During the rigorous two-week serial on the Cumbrian hills and wilds of Wathgill military area participants cover 65 essential training objectives.

The challenging drills – many of which will be new to part-time personnel – include honing techniques on weapons, navigational tests and fitness appraisals.

"This isn't a pass or fail exercise but it gives us an idea of the standards people are at so we can give individuals feedback on things to work at," said Maj Jesty.

"Hopefully all those coming through Afghan Tiger now will end up on Herrick 17, operating in the same roles as their

Regular colleagues."

The London Regiment is currently overseeing the package ahead of its own personnel joining the Scots Guards on operational duty in October.

"I haven't been on tour before but I think this is good preparation for deploying," commented Lt Matt Jones, after laying down fire with his SA80.

The 23-year-old, who currently works for a technology company, added: "The exercise's exact purpose is to close any gap between Regulars and Reserves."

"There's no reason why TA soldiers can't work to the same level."

Fus George Young conceded there was much to learn over the fortnight.

"Shooting from different positions while on the move is new to me so this will better prepare me," he said.

"Getting out on operations was the major reason I joined the Army and I can't imagine the training being any better >>



**On target:** Afghan Tiger aims to improve part-time combat competency



**Sharp shooters:** Live firing is one of many tests on the two-week package



**Nothing to hide:** Reservist troops are keen to equal their Regular colleagues









**‘AS RESERVISTS I THINK WE HAVE THE NECESSARY SKILLS BUT WE JUST WANT CHANCES LIKE THIS TO PRACTISE THEM’**

as I think it covers everything.”

Under recommendations set out in the Future Reserves 2020 report, the Service’s volunteers are set to total 30,000.

But as demonstrated during the pre-mobilisation event, part-time personnel are already evolving to form a diverse machine with depth of experience – including that of former full-time soldiers.

After a 23-year career with the Irish Guards, Cpl Anthony Farrelly (REME) decided he had not quite finished with Army life and rejoined as a Reservist.

“I left when my service ended but then after six months as a civilian I came back,” said the veteran of Northern Ireland and Iraq. “I missed the banter and there’s a different type of honesty and loyalty in the military that you don’t get outside.”

The 44-year-old now hopes to join his son, LBdr Ashley Farrelly (RA), on Herrick 17.

“It is what he wanted to do and is what I am used to and love,” explained the ex-Regular soldier.

“There is even a chance that our paths will cross while out there.

“I joined up to see the world and test myself and my reasons now are exactly the same,” he added,

LCpl Natalie Gardener (RLC) explained how the opportunity was giving participants valuable extra training time.

“As Reservists I think we have the necessary skills but we just want chances like this to practise them,” the hospital physiotherapist said.

“As long as you show yourself as hardworking, up to the job and switched on then integration will work.”

She continued: “There’s always going to be a kind of barrier between Regulars and TA soldiers but that exists even between sections – there will forever be competitiveness because that’s what the Army is about.”

Using the same weapons, techniques, tactics and procedures as their colleagues, Territorials will arrive in Helmand ready to fight with a common purpose.

“Volunteers will soon be indistinguishable from the rest of our Service personnel,” Maj Jesty insisted. ■



**War break:** Ration packs identical to those used in theatre add to the realism of the competitive exercise



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A member of





**Report: Joe Clapson**  
**Pictures: Steve Dock**

**E**QUIPPED with the nerve and skill to parachute through hostile airspace, the Pathfinders Platoon could one day be the first British boots on the ground of a war zone. If duty calls, this unit

must be self-sufficient and ready to operate with limited medical support.

This might read like the script of a Hollywood film trailer, but the austere scenarios the Pathfinders must prepare for as part of the Army's Airborne Task Force are difficult to overstate.

To understand what it takes to join the ranks of the highly skilled reconnaissance team, *Soldier* visited the Brecon

Beacons where its latest crop of applicants attempted to pass a six-week selection event.

"This is recognised as being tougher than P Company and All Arms Commando courses," said the unit's training sergeant, who must remain anonymous for operational security reasons.

"Regardless of whether you're Para-trained or not, everyone is taken out of their comfort zone here.

"The tough lessons and tests are designed to confirm troops as grade one and ensure they are up to the task."

## **'WE NEED TO HAVE WISE HEADS ON YOUNG SOLDIERS'**

Hopefuls were assessed on their aptitude in the classroom, on standard operating procedures and across challenging and inhospitable terrain.

Drills included a military swim test, an eight-mile march carrying 55lbs and lessons in navigation and communications.

Later in the programme soldiers got to grips with live firing, ambushes and the handling of explosives.

If successful in these strenuous serials, personnel are rewarded with an exciting career of high adrenalin and extreme pressure.

Pathfinders stand poised to be sent out in front of any 16 Air Assault Brigade deployment and must be experts in covert parachuting, living out of a Bergen, calling in air assets and covering their tracks.

Deployed up to 300km ahead of the rest of the Army, their job is to secure areas and assure incoming troops that the ground is safe to operate on.

Officer commanding Maj Chris Tilley explained how his unit offers an alternative battlefield view to cameras in the sky.

"There is a direct line from Pathfinders'



headquarters to the brigade commander and we answer the questions he has about the place he will be operating in," the Serviceman said.

"We are predominately looking at things that cannot be spotted from an unmanned aerial vehicle such as the dynamics of a situation, who is who and judgements on whether troops can sustain themselves in the area.

"For this reason we need to have wise heads on young soldiers."

The platoon has repeatedly demonstrated its success working under the radar to protect British lives.

In 2008 its personnel discovered an important road to the Kajaki Dam in Helmand province.

"We found the main route that gave us the fast access we needed to enable the Kajaki turbine to be built," explained the anonymous sergeant.

"It came from a chance encounter with

a taxi driver who said the passage allowed him to avoid insurgents.

"Using it meant that nobody got blown up when our people had been expecting a full-out battle and it demonstrated how our guys can find things that intelligence, surveillance, target acquisition and reconnaissance assets cannot."

In the driving, ice-cold rain of the Welsh landscape, troops hoping to join the Colchester-based platoon took time out of a seven-hour navigation exercise to describe the selection experience.

"It's a lot more intense and physically and mentally demanding than anything I've done before but I've started so I can't jack it in," said one soldier.

His colleague added: "This is the hardest thing I've ever done but it's worth every bit of effort and energy for the chance to get chosen – for airborne soldiers this is the pinnacle of their career."

Whether abseiling from a helicopter into

a jungle or free-falling to 5,000ft for a covert insertion, this job demands the strongest and most capable of characters.

Any member of the Armed Forces can apply to join, providing they have their battalion's permission.

Maj Tilley emphasised that the unit's recruitment process was a search for excellence rather than higher numbers.

"We want to identify those who have mental determination and initiative while working under pressure and fatigue," he explained to *Soldier*.

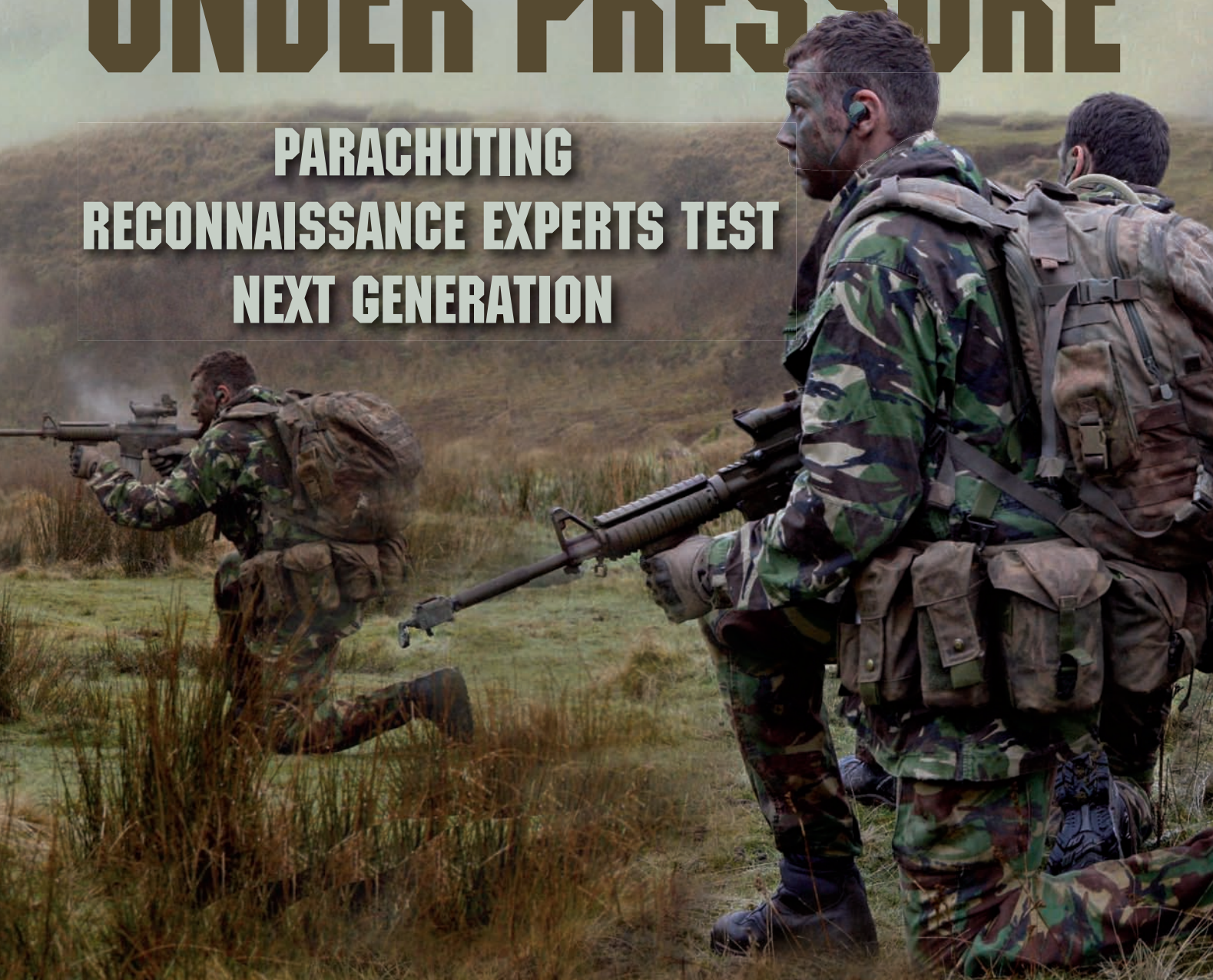
"Regardless of how fit you are, this course strips you down to the bare bones and that's when we see what you are about.

"When on operations, these people will be isolated so there is no space for a weak link." ■

● To learn more about the Pathfinders Platoon and how to apply for selection email [16X-PF-CSM@mod.uk](mailto:16X-PF-CSM@mod.uk)

# UNDER PRESSURE

## PARACHUTING RECONNAISSANCE EXPERTS TEST NEXT GENERATION





# 1 REMEMBER PRIME POSITIONS



# RANKED

## Top ten strength and conditioning tips

Workout wisdom from the Royal Army Physical Training Corps

### 2 KNOW SQUAT

THE squat is the king of exercises, whether done with bodyweight alone or kit such as weight-training bars, dumb-bells or kettle-bells. It should be a core part of any fitness programme and is very good for posture.

Research has also linked it to better performance in sprinting, endurance running and manual handling tasks.



### 3 FIND FORM IN FATIGUE

WHEN you tire the body tries to cheat movements in order to complete the exercise. This increases your chance of getting injured so always make sure you are executing good form throughout the routine.



### 4 BALANCE YOUR ACT

TROOPS who only train according to what they see in the mirror – biceps, chest, abdominals and shoulders – may look good but the rear of their bodies can often be poorly developed. Don't neglect to work areas such as glutes, hamstrings and back muscles. This can help to reduce injury and avoid a "gorilla"-type posture.







INCLUDE the six key actions of squat, lunge, bend, push, pull and twist into your workout. This helps to train all the major muscle groups, keep joints healthy and will ensure strength is carried into your Army role.



At full stretch: W02 (QMSI) Barry Sweatman and Sgt (SI) Vicky Blackburn from the Army School of Physical Training demonstrate the six major movements Pictures: Graeme Main



## 5 GET OVER SIZE

YOU don't have to be large to be strong – just look at the size difference between Olympic weightlifters and bodybuilders. Strength and conditioning sessions are also a vital part of training programmes for elite endurance athletes such as long-distance runner Paula Radcliffe – hardly the Incredible Hulk!

## 6 MIX IT UP

KEEP everything interesting. Methods such as CrossFit, functional circuits and “farmers”-style training have all recently grown in popularity. They combine aerobic, strength and conditioning, plyometric and strongman-type workouts to hit all the energy systems in the body and have a close resemblance to soldiering. Such approaches are very intense and should only be done under the guidance of an experienced instructor.

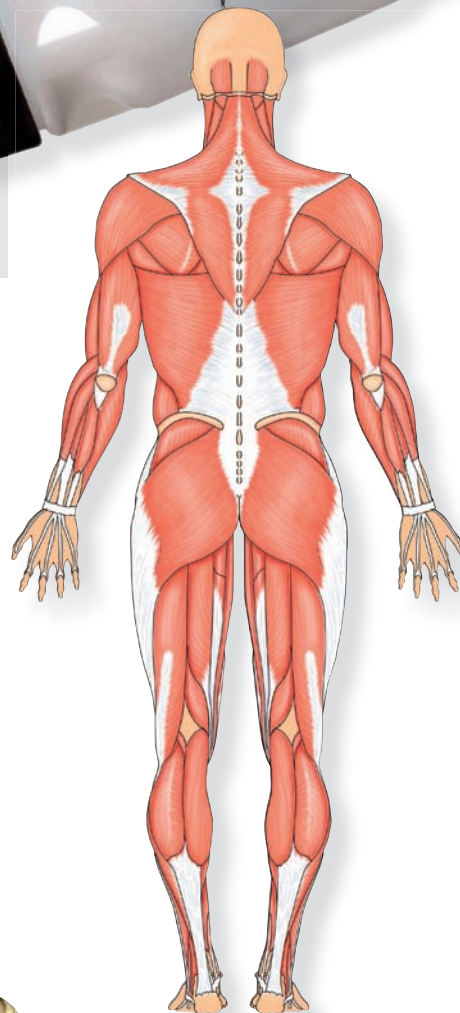
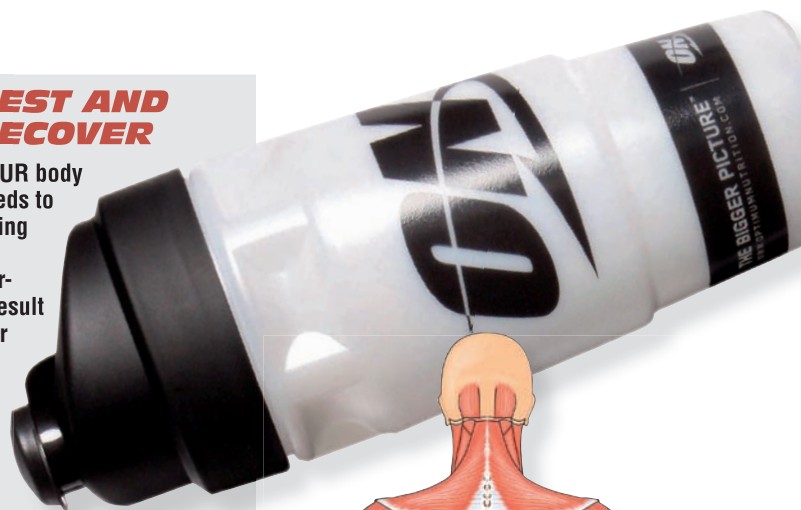


## 7 BE INVENTIVE

STRENGTH and conditioning is not just about lifting heavy weights in the gym. Most Army units don't have the equipment or space to deliver gold standard training so use what you do have or else make it. Improvised strongman equipment such as sandbags, ropes, tyres, chains, water barrels and sledgehammers make great workout tools. The only limitation is your imagination.

## 8 REST AND RECOVER

YOUR body needs to adapt after training and this is done during rest. Over-eagerness can result in injury or lower performance and the more intense the session, the more recovery time you need. Make sure you stay hydrated and that your nutritional intake is adequate.



## 9 KEEP IT SIMPLE

MOST people tend to select far too many exercises in a single workout session. Limit yourself to three or four as suggested in tip one – adding a few aesthetic movements such as bicep curls if you wish. Learn to execute these with perfect form and increase the weight and volume as you improve. Ensure you change your programme every four to six weeks to prevent a training plateau.

## 10 FIND ADVICE

SAFETY is paramount so if you aren't sure how to approach an exercise, seek help from your physical training instructors or a qualified strength and conditioning coach.







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# FREEZE FIX

Injured troops embrace Alpine escapades







**Report: Sarah Goldthorpe**  
**Pictures: Steve Dock**

**H**ITTING the slopes for the first time can be a considerably daunting experience.

Taking to them again without the use of your legs is an altogether different and more challenging mission.

But thanks to a charity that unites injured troops and veterans, overcoming disability to rediscover the world of extreme sports is all in a day's work.

The only real struggle is making soldiers aware that such opportunities are available.

"The Not Forgotten Association (NFA) might not get talked about in bars, but what we do is a hugely important welfare activity through leisure and recreation," explained chief executive Piers Storie-Pugh, as *Soldier* joined his team on a five-day trip to the French ski resort of La Plagne.

Established in 1920 by Marta Cunningham – a singer the charity boss characterises as "the Katherine Jenkins of her day" – the tri-Service organisation entertains military men and women whose lives have been affected by injury of any sort.

After the Great War, Cunningham had been horrified to discover thousands of badly wounded soldiers lying bored and lonely in hospitals.

Since then the association has evolved to offer more than 90 different activities – from music gigs, holidays, sport matches and battlefield tours to an annual Christmas party at St James's Palace in London.

"On our trips we allow people the opportunity to push themselves further," Storie-Pugh added.

"If they don't want to do that, they can just enjoy being in the company of others instead.

"One of the unique things about us is that we accept everyone from teenagers to veterans in their nineties.

"This is hugely beneficial because it offers the extremes of comradeship and means those who are embarking on an existence with life-changing injuries can take inspiration from those who have been there."

Troy Connor, a former lance corporal with 1st Battalion, The Parachute

Regiment, was medically discharged from the Army last year after suffering a brain injury as the result of an explosion in Afghanistan.

He joined the ski trip on the advice of his welfare officer.

"It's good to get out," he explained during a well-earned break from the icy inclines.

"We have all got different injuries and backgrounds but everyone here has the military ethos."

Roger Mercer, formerly of 2nd Battalion, The Mercian Regiment, got in touch with the group through Combat Stress.

He lost the use of his legs after fracturing vertebrae during operations in Kabul.

"This is addictive," he told *Soldier*, after putting an adapted ski chair through its paces on the tourist-filled slopes.

"Most of the time there are new people on these outings and when I first

came I was really nervous.

"But as soon as the guys get their hands on you, that is it.

"I've also done quad biking and sea fishing and since starting these activities I have had no mental problems at all."

Former Royal Irish Regiment sergeant Ally McKinney was enjoying his first trip with the group following a severe injury in Afghanistan six years ago.

"Certain charities help when you are serving but the Not Forgotten Association also steps in when you have left," the father-of-one said.

"It gets you out doing things so you are not sitting around the house and being stagnant.

## 'WHAT WE DO IS A HUGELY IMPORTANT WELFARE ACTIVITY THROUGH LEISURE AND RECREATION'



**Hitting the slopes:** Former soldier Roger Mercer puts an adapted ski chair through its paces during day one of the Alpine trip



**Cool runnings:** France's La Plagne resort gave troops the chance to test their stamina, ski skills and confidence while making new friends

"It has also made me think that all the things I've done before, I will do again."

Rob Maxwell, a snowboarding amputee hailing from the same unit, added: "The whole being of this organisation is in its title.

"No one here is left out or forgotten and we all get together and enjoy a bit of banter."

The charity might already help more than 12,000 troops each year, but its leaders are convinced that ongoing ops in Helmand leave no room for complacency in reaching out to more.

"There's a real role for the NFA and the sad thing is that a lot of our beneficiaries don't know we exist," Storie-Pugh said.

"Everything we do really does say 'thank goodness someone has not forgotten us'."

Watching fractured confidence being steadily rebuilt in the electric atmosphere of a mountain resort, this charity's impact is certainly very difficult to overlook. ■

● For more information on the Not Forgotten Association visit [www.nfassociation.org](http://www.nfassociation.org)





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**Taking aim:** Members of 5 Infantry Brigade practise using the Blowpipe man-portable surface-to-air missile launcher on-board the QE2 en route to the Falkland Islands

Picture: Paul Haley, Soldier archive



**P48-49**  
**April 1982: War begins**  
A look at how the conflict unfolded including a timeline of key political events



**P50-51**  
**"Quite horrendous"**  
Soldier interviews British veterans about their most vivid battlefield memories

# BRIEF BUT BITTER

Falklands conflict remembered three decades on



## Report: Sarah Goldthorpe

**A**S the first Argentine helicopter touched down on the Falkland Islands in the early hours of April 2, 1982, few would have guessed the short but bloody battle that would ensue.

A force of 1,000 had arrived to claim sovereignty of the region, leaving Britain's 80-man garrison of Royal Marines vastly outnumbered.

By 0930 that day South American soldiers were firmly in control.

Twenty-four hours later the UN Security Council condemned Argentina's attack and imposed a resolution calling for the country's withdrawal.

The UK, which had ruled the islands for 150 years, quickly responded.

Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher insisted that the territory's 1,800 residents were "of British tradition and stock" and sent a task force to reclaim the land.

In the fighting that followed, 655 Argentine and 255 UK troops lost their lives.

Three Falkland Islanders were also killed.

Britain's force was 28,000 strong while its enemy's consisted of just 12,000, mainly conscripted, personnel.

During this period, Thatcher won huge respect for her decisive political leadership – something captured powerfully in this year's box office hit film *The Iron Lady*.

"We will stand on principle or we will not stand at all," actress Meryl Streep insists, in her memorable portrayal of the premier's stance.

According to those at the forefront of the latest British Army missions, such military action remains acutely relevant.

Op Herrick 16 may be taking place 9,000 miles away and 30 years later, but its leaders believe modern troops can learn much from encounters in the Falklands.

"It is vitally important that today's young soldiers are well informed about previous wars," explained Maj Ian Lawrence, the current spokesman for Task Force Helmand.

"While geography and types of equipment will undoubtedly change from conflict to conflict, it is the human factors and our core values that

will often determine victory.

"These enduring characteristics, exemplified through actions of past operations, will resonate with all soldiers deployed on Herrick and stand the test of time; we must study them carefully."

Former *Soldier* photographer Paul Haley (pictured below right) was one of few civilians to enter the islands with British forces in 1982.

To mark the anniversary of the battle, he has released a book of powerful images from the era entitled *One Man's War*.

"There were many good pictures which had never been used and I thought they needed printing before they were lost forever," the Yorkshireman said.

"Perhaps some families of those who are in the book will see it and start to understand what people went through."

South Georgia was recaptured by Britain on April 25 when Thatcher told the nation to "rejoice".

Thirty years may have passed since this successful operation began but, as learnt so many times before by British troops, its memories and lessons will resonate for far longer. ■

**We will stand on principle or we will not stand at all**



### TIMELINE : How the conflict unfolded in April 1982...

**April 2**  
Falkland Islands invaded by Argentina

**April 5**  
First task force ships, HMS *Hermes* and HMS *Invincible*, set sail for the islands

**April 3**  
UN Security Council demands withdrawal of Argentine forces

**April 7**  
Britain announces a 200-mile maritime exclusion zone around the Falklands

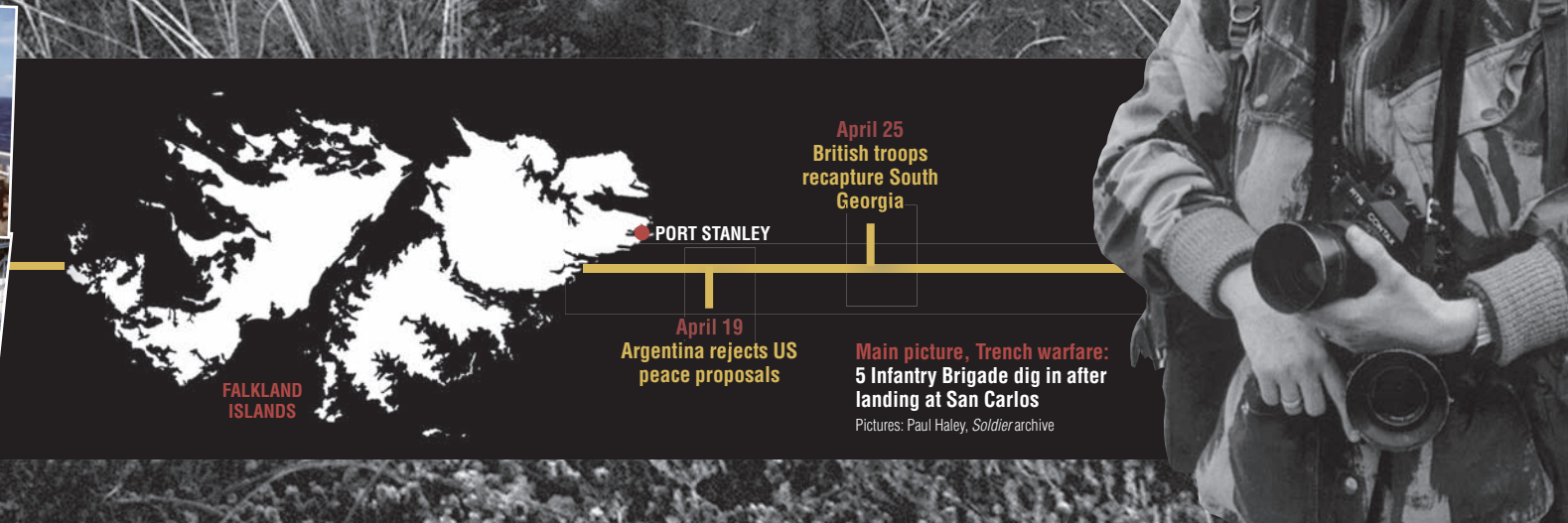




# Intensive invasion

In April 1982 Argentine soldiers  
stormed the Falkland Islands

A costly war had begun...



FALKLAND  
ISLANDS

PORT STANLEY

April 19  
Argentina rejects US  
peace proposals

April 25  
British troops  
recapture South  
Georgia

Main picture, Trench warfare:  
5 Infantry Brigade dig in after  
landing at San Carlos

Pictures: Paul Haley, Soldier archive



## Interviews: Joe Clapson

**E**VERY unit selected to go was delighted," recalls Tony Davies, the regimental sergeant major of the Welsh Guards during the Falklands War.

"Nobody knew where these islands were but we knew it was a British territory and we would be protecting it from the Argies.

"We were going to kick them out."

With severe weather conditions making it a struggle to transport vital resources to the front line, British troops arrived in the South Atlantic to fight a relatively unknown enemy.

"It was freezing cold, night after night," 66-year-old Davies explains to *Soldier*. "Every regiment had people hit by frostbite, including the Paras and Commandos.

"Ammunition was running low, there were no helicopters and we were short of food – things got very tight.

"We all knew the conflict was going to be a close-run thing but no matter what the outcome was, we would never have given up."

Thirty years after Argentina's military junta invaded "Las Malvinas", former colour sergeant Brian Faulkner shares his memories of stepping up to defend the archipelago with 3rd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment.

"I remember being on-board HMS *Intrepid* and getting told that once we got on the landing craft we would be in complete darkness," he says.

"But when we actually came out of the ship there were bright blue skies and it was a clear, beautiful day – with Skyhawks trying to zap every vessel in the Sound."

The veteran, who is still based in Aldershot as he was in 1982, adds: "The beach wasn't suitable for landing which meant that we had to get into the icy water.

"We wondered how long we would be in there and when we could remove our freezing wet clothes. It turned out to be a long time later."

The conflict that unfolded before personnel proved to be bloody and uncompromising, with devastating consequences for both sides.

"One night the Royal Marines lost 20 men, 19 from the Scots Guards fell on Mount Tumbledown and we lost 32 on the *Sir Galahad*," says the former Serviceman, who is now vice president of the South Atlantic Medal Association. "But that didn't hit us until the war

had finished. We just wanted to get on with it and see things through."

After marching on Port St Carlos, the medical team that Faulkner worked with set up a treatment centre in a sheep shearer's house.

On May 25 news came that the *Atlantic Conveyor* had been sunk and the decision was taken for Royal Marines and 3 Para personnel to move over Teal Inlet.

"The conditions were quite horrendous and we didn't have suitable footwear," explains the 64-year-old.

"A lot of people were crippled with trench foot.

"We had been prepared to be called out to a northern European conflict but this had come out of the blue."

As the dedicated troops continued their mission to reclaim British territory, they were faced with numerous uncharted minefields.

After being given the signal to move on towards Port Stanley, Faulkner and his comrades had no idea what the

following hours would hold.

"We didn't know what the outcome would be, we just knew the Argentine force was out there in front of us," he remembers.

"When we got to the edge of a field a B Company non-commissioned officer stood on a mine which alerted them to our whereabouts – then all hell broke loose."

Against a backdrop of explosions, the company's sergeant major drew his bayonet and placed it on his rifle.

"That was the indication for everyone along the line," explains the veteran. "From then on, they went in with blades."

Faulkner received the Distinguished Conduct Medal for his work identifying the casualties and fatalities that resulted from the ensuing fight.

But he admits that it wasn't until he was decorated that he fully acknowledged what occurred during the operation.

"It had all been a blur at the time," he adds.

"I had been in the battalion for 17 years and had got to know the guys, their families and children; they had become part of me.

"When I was trying to indicate where the bodies were, I began seeing dead friends like Ian McKay [posthumous Victoria Cross recipient], Doc Murdoch and several others."

A total of 255 British personnel perished in the 74-day battle to reclaim the UK territory and hundreds more have been physically and mentally affected by their experiences on the islands.

"Is anything worth nearly 1,000 people from both sides dying for?" Faulkner deliberates.

"Yes, I think so. It was a job well done." ■

**'It was  
a job  
well  
done'**

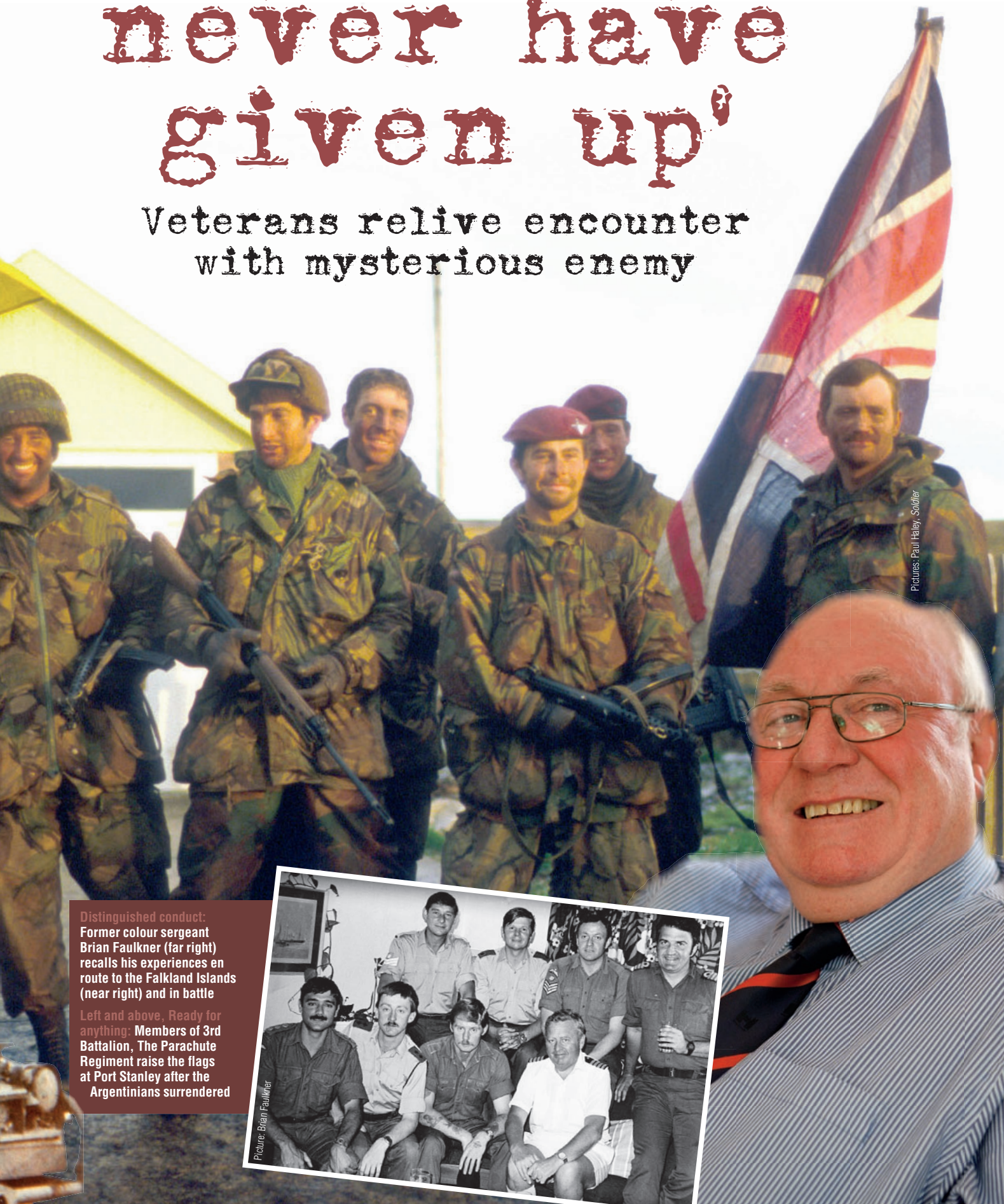


Picture: Brian Faulkner



# 'We would never have given up'

Veterans relive encounter with mysterious enemy



Pictures: Paul Haley, Soldier

**Distinguished conduct:**  
Former colour sergeant Brian Faulkner (far right) recalls his experiences en route to the Falkland Islands (near right) and in battle

**Left and above, Ready for anything:** Members of 3rd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment raise the flags at Port Stanley after the Argentinians surrendered



Picture: Brian Faulkner



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## Easing eligibility will curb commemoratives

**W**HILST all veterans will no doubt respect the opinions expressed by SSgt Mark Smith, "Buying baubles devalues medals" (March), there are many – both decorated and non-decorated – who will certainly not share them.

The argument the senior NCO put forward was "potential risk does not equal danger", but he overlooked the many personnel who were selectively targeted, maimed and killed on mainland Britain and Europe during the Northern Ireland conflict.

Only those based in the province itself were awarded the General Service Medal, despite the danger elsewhere being considered so great that orders were given forbidding the wearing of military uniform in public.

The risk to UK personnel was very real and was manifested in countless IED attacks and shootings.

Indeed, dissident republican forces made no secret of the fact that they considered British troops legitimate targets in a campaign they viewed as a war and that, in 1971, the British government acknowledged as an engagement in war.



**"I've just received another blasted letter about medals, David, and the wife – ex-WRAC and medal-less – is now nagging me too. Can we not move just a little?"**

It is widely regarded that the UK's honours system is archaic and wholly inconsistent, which is why an urgent review of the process of awarding medals

is so important.

Many countries, including Commonwealth states, now issue National Defence Medals and the Dutch have endorsed a Cold War Medal for veterans.

I would argue that it is precisely because the UK is so reticent in awarding decorations that the proliferation of commemoratives exists.

Also, do not forget that there are other honours such as the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal which certain ranks were excluded from and the pot luck element of awards such as the Queen's Silver Jubilee Medal.

A final point to consider is that income generated by some of the purchased "baubles" referred to by SSgt Smith actually goes towards helping former and current members of the Armed Forces, including charities under royal patronage.

One has to be careful not to pursue a case of blaming the symptoms whilst simply ignoring the cause. – **A Davies, Bristol.**

● **Baubles barb reignites bling debate – page 57**

## Ink has no impact on troops' performance

AS the applications warrant officer for the commander of regional recruiting Scotland (51 Brigade), I'd like to comment on a letter in February's issue headed "Time to get tough on tattoos".

In the event that recruiters working within the region's Armed Forces and Army careers information offices are unsure of an applicant's body art, I am responsible for approving or rejecting cases. In turn, I can pass the application to the Army recruiting and training division for a decision.

So yes, the author of the original letter is correct, there are guidelines and a chain of command in relation to tattoos and piercings, but they are exactly that – not policy.

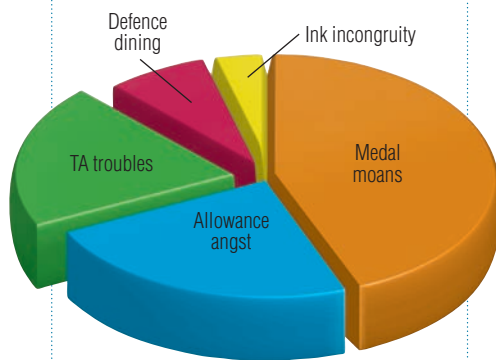
Beyond the recruiting process, commanding officers of units have their own parameters.

Regardless, does a tattoo really make someone a bad person and affect the way in which they soldier? – **W02 Dougie Graham, Scotland.**



## Slice of Service life

This month's ruminations from the ranks...



## Cookhouse complaint canned

I AM writing in response to the letter titled "Unwanted dinner guests", which featured in March's issue.

The junior non-commissioned officer in question needs to realise the Armed Forces have moved with the times.

There is no such thing as a junior ranks' cookhouse; in its place is a profit-based restaurant which can be and is used by officers, senior NCOs and civilians.

I have on occasions taken my meals in the facility provided at our station, more often than not to see how the soldiers in my chain of command are being fed and

not because I can't be bothered to "book in" or conform to the relevant dress code.

As to our messes being overrun by soldiers, I'm afraid that access to the sergeants' and officers' messes are a privilege earned on promotion and not open to all.

Moreover, if all that the author of the letter has to moan about is a few officers and SNOs boosting the profits of his eating establishment then he is a lucky individual indeed. – **SSgt Sean Toon.**

● **Come dine with us, say chiefs – page 13**



# Signaller counts cost of 'stitch-up'

**M**Y UNIT has just been issued with the personal clothing system and as expected I was requested to attach badges to its side panels.

Why is this not a free service?

Some of my peers have paid up to £22 to have two emblems and two name tags stitched on.

Furthermore, why is there a requirement within the Royal Corps of Signals to wear stable belts, which are priced at an extortionate £24?

In addition, I have had to pay for my medal to be mounted and my ribbon to be attached to my previous number 2 dress. — Name and address supplied.

**Lt Col (Retd) Kestrel Simson, PS12(A), responds:** The Army requires everyone in combat uniform to wear the Union emblem on the upper portion of the left sleeve blanking plate and these are sewn on during manufacture.

Qualification badges are worn on the right-hand side and these may be sewn onto two areas for free through the various garrison contract tailors.

However, formation and tactical recognition flashes are still optional items and the Service will not pay for these

to be attached.

That said, most regiments and corps in the Army choose to wear them and therefore the procurement and tailoring of these particular badges must be either at personal expense or subsidised from unit funds. The same applies to name tags.

Stable belts are also an optional item of dress and therefore not supplied by the Service.

If regiments' or corps' regulations state that they are to be worn with certain orders of dress, this is a matter for you to take up with your own chain of command.

There has been a mistake if you have had to pay to add any new medal ribbons to your number 2 dress or to add swing-mounted medals to your medal bar — these are both done at the Army's expense.

However, the Service will not pay for awards to be court mounted unless you are on ceremonial duties in London or Edinburgh. If your corps' dress regulations state that decorations are to be presented in this way, again this is a matter for you to take up with your chain of command.

**Tactical tailoring:** Pte Charlie Morris-Cook (1 R Anglian) models the new personal clothing system during 12th Mechanized Brigade's pre-deployment training on Salisbury Plain Picture: Steve Dock



**"Yes Donna, he's away on another six-month tour... still as a 'cosseted Serviceman' it's a small price to pay."**

## TRY CIVVY STREET FOR SIZE

■ FURTHER to the letter written by the impoverished Capt Kev Carpenter, "Pumped up over petrol prices" (March), I am amazed at the utter insensitivity of this leader of men towards those who support his career, namely the civilian personnel of his unit.

His dismissive statement in respect of commuters, "in the private sector an individual chooses their place of work and location of their property", is insulting in the extreme.

When Capt Carpenter reaches his post service "civilianisation" his words will come back to haunt him.

In the real world people live where they can (just) afford and commute to wherever they can find work.

On an administration officer's salary I could not get a mortgage on my own, let alone pick and choose where to reside.

Civilians do not get allowances such as Home to Duty Travel, two pay rises each year, housing grants, moving costs or a guaranteed pension.

We drive vehicles which are probably older and smaller than his because that is all we can afford and pay for our children's schooling.

Sadly, Capt Carpenter's letter was a rerun of so many cosseted-Service-person-versus-the-real-world debates, so I accept I am preaching to the choir. — Ian Goodwin-Reeves, Administration Officer, 150 Rec Coy REME (V).

## DIAMOND DIVERSITY

■ AS a captain of four-and-a-half years with operational experience in Afghanistan, I find it simply remarkable that two of my recruits who have recently completed 14 weeks of basic training have been awarded the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal.

My congratulations goes out to these individuals. In turn, my commiserations are passed to all those including myself who failed to make the qualifying grade. — A captain, British Army.







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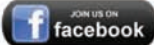
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# Baubles barb reignites bling debate

**I** REMAIN unimpressed by the letter from SSgt Mark Smith, "Buying baubles devalues medals" (March). The soldier needs to read up on his history.

It is both insulting and arrant nonsense to opine in writing "do not pretend you were in harm's way".

I commend the author to the comments made about the Berlin Airlift by the Chief of the Air Staff, ACM Sir Glenn Torpy.

Likewise, I suggest he reads the account of serving in post-Second World War Berlin by Victoria Cross winner John Kenneally (Irish Guards).

Certainly there was both risk and rigour.

Does the good staff sergeant believe there was no danger involved for the guinea pigs of Porton Down or those personnel who participated in the Pacific nuclear tests?

Why did Australia and New Zealand award decorations to the latter?

No British medallic recognition was



given directly after the Korean Armistice of July 27, 1953. Yet for 18 months men were on a constant war footing in a very

harsh environment. All other countries participating presented their Servicemen with medals.

Why did Gen Sir Anthony Farrar-Hockley promote and approve the institution of a commemorative National Service Medal with The Royal British Legion?

I venture to suggest that it was by way of recognition in view of the abject failure of successive governments to do so.

He acknowledged the injustice.

It is no wonder that disillusioned former veterans buy commemoratives. They have simply been forgotten. Medallic recognition in this country has been utterly shambolic and riddled by inconsistencies.

If we were to follow the Australian and New Zealand example of instituting a National Defence Medal, there would be no need to order any of the wretched "bling".

Further comment is otiose. – **Charles Lovelace, Liphook.**

## Commemorative charlatans should not eclipse those honoured on ops

**I** WRITE in response to the letter published in March's issue regarding former Servicemen purchasing commemorative decorations online and wearing them on parade, "Buying baubles devalues medals".

I wholeheartedly agree with the opinion given by the author.

At the time of writing, 404 British military personnel have been killed on active service in

Afghanistan. Each will have received a solitary medal for their sacrifice.

It is a sad reflection of the state of the world over the past 20 years that operational awards for service in various hot spots have become more commonplace.

Those who served their country prior to recent campaigns in the Balkans, Iraq and Afghanistan should be thanked for their efforts – it's not their

fault they wore the uniform in a more peaceful and stable climate – but they should not be allowed to masquerade as operational veterans.

When a man who spent two years of national service in Germany is wearing more medals than Victoria Cross winner LCpl Johnson Beharry something has gone wrong. Display what you earned, not what you have bought online. – **SSgt D Williams, DSI.**

### KOREAN COURAGE

**I** WRITE in reference to the comments made by Capt Ossie Osbourne in February's *Talkback* and to offer a Korean War veteran's perspective on the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal.

Upon Her Majesty's accession to the throne, a live 21-gun salute was fired toward enemy lines. We were fighting a difficult campaign with less than adequate kit and the majority of the force were made up of 18- and 19-year-olds on national service.

During the fighting we suffered casualties of 1,048 dead, more than the combined total lost in the Falkland Islands, Bosnia, Iraq and Afghanistan.

The bereaved families did not have the bodies of their loved ones returned as is the norm today, with the fallen instead buried in a foreign land.

I met a junior rank recently who already has six medals and was about to receive another. With this in mind, please have a little compassion for those who only have a solitary British award to show for their efforts in Korea. – **Cyril Luger, ex-warrant officer.**

## Are nuclear test veterans not worthy?

THIS business of medals issued for service devaluing bravery or deployment awards is total nonsense.

Cpl Ben Roberts-Smith of the Australian Special Forces proudly wears his National Defence Medal alongside his Victoria Cross and operational decorations. Is SSgt Mark Smith seriously suggesting that this demeans or diminishes him in any way?

The men and women who have faithfully served the UK in various military functions for many years deserve better and warrant both recognition and appreciation for the efforts they put in.

There is a sort of feeding frenzy concerning so-called "Walts" and commemorative medals, and while I agree that paid-for decorations are probably not worth the outlay, their presence is a direct result of the niggardly attitude of the MoD and honours committee.

I would suggest to SSgt Smith that the government has been marking time for more than 60 years and needs to catch up with the rest of the world when it comes to the issuing of defence medals.

Might I also ask how the senior NCO equates his comments about the deeming



of worthiness for medals to the men who performed the arduous and deadly work of manning convoys to Russia? Or to the troops who were made to soak up radiation during the nuclear tests carried out at Christmas Island and Maralinga? – **Gerry P.**



## BEMUSED BY BUSINESS COVER

■ WHY, under Joint Service Publication 752, are military personnel required to have business use car insurance in order to claim motor mileage allowance?

The primary definition of business is “the activity of buying and selling goods and services”.

When a soldier is required to use a private car for official purposes it is to get to their place of work. This is commuting not a business venture.

Therefore, why is an insurance policy covering social, domestic, pleasure and commuting not deemed to be enough?

With the soaring cost of motor insurance, adding business use seems like overkill. – Name and address supplied.

**Brig Tim Hyams, DPS(A), writes:** We first must be clear on what is, and is not, duty travel. You are not on duty while you are travelling to and from work. Hence, commuting to your normal station is not duty travel.

Most insurers cover commuting under normal insurance (social, domestic and pleasure) cover and there is no requirement for business insurance (but please check with your insurer).

Duty travel refers to journeys undertaken as part of your military role. These are trips for which you are entitled to military transport or an appropriate warrant; in these circumstances the Army cannot compel you to use your own car.

However, where you choose to undertake a duty journey in a private vehicle, the chain of command has a responsibility to ensure that, should you have an accident, both you and the MoD are protected legally and financially.

If you were to have an accident and cause damage or injury to another party whilst using a private vehicle for duty reasons, your own insurance cover may be invalidated as the vehicle was being used for business purposes.

The rules are there to protect you and the MoD; as such it would be inappropriate for the department to allow you to conduct business in your own car without ensuring you have the necessary insurance cover.



## Degree of unfairness over status of NVQs

■ WOULD be grateful for clarification as to the Service's definition of a child in full-time education.

A number of Cyprus-based personnel with sons or daughters who are over the age of 18 and studying for national vocational qualifications (NVQs) have been told their children are not entitled to Local Overseas Allowance (LOA) or access to free medical treatment.

Such a policy seems to offer little in the way of savings but could have a significant impact on morale. – Lt Col R Burley, Episkopi Garrison, BFPO 53.

**Brig Tim Hyams, DPS(A), writes:** MoD policy defines a child as being below the age of majority (18 years).

If older, in order to be classified as a dependent, a son or daughter must be 24 years or younger, unmarried or not in a civil partnership and be in full-time education at a school, college or university (studying for a first degree only) or out of full-time education for

up to one year between secondary and further education.

For allowance purposes, the MoD does not consider NVQs to be full-time study.

As a result of Strategic Defence and Security Review savings measures, there are additional restrictions regarding children and receipt of LOA.

A child is deemed to be eligible until the end of the academic year during which he or she has reached the age of 18, or until completion of the A-level stage of education (or equivalent), whichever is the later.

Therefore a dependent, having completed A-levels, is ineligible for LOA, regardless of the type of study in which they are engaged.

As far as overseas service in Cyprus is concerned, under the Treaty of Entitlement dependents in Cyprus aged 18 to 24 and in full-time education (not NVQs) are entitled to medical and dental treatment, provided that the correct on-island registration process is followed.



“Choice? Where do you think you are man... Costa Coffee?”

■ I AM based at Catterick Garrison and recently thought I'd treat myself to a meal in the cookhouse.

I decided to go for the healthy option of a ham and cheese panini with some salad which used to cost no more than £2, but when I got to the till I was shocked to be asked for £2.55.

In comparison, that day's special of chicken goujons and chips with a can of pop was £2.40.

How are personnel supposed to eat healthily when doing so is more expensive than the fast food option? Surely it should be the other way round. – LCpl Collins, Catterick.

**Sodexo Defence responds:** We aim to offer great value food to all of our customers and the correct price you should have paid for a panini with two fillings is £1.80, including a

side salad.

Unfortunately you were incorrectly charged, but this is something that we would normally be content to rectify at the till if a genuine mistake is brought to the attention of a member of the Sodexo Defence team. If you are happy to provide your name or still have the receipt, then we will provide a full refund.

Regarding your question about the price of healthy eating options, we do not try to influence our customers' food choices with pricing, all of our prices are simply based on the cost of the ingredients.

It may also be worth noting that the cost of a ham and cheese panini at Costa Coffee in Darlington is £3.95.





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## APPOINTMENTS

**Maj Gen James Bashall**, former general officer commanding 1 (UK) Armoured Division, appointed **colonel commandant of the Royal Army Physical Training Corps**.



## COMPETITIONS

**Spine line winners:** Tracey Gellatly, Blairgowrie, Perthshire; Mr K Dickens, Hounslow, Middlesex; Mr G Drew, Kineton, Warwickshire; Mrs J K Matthews, Dallas, Morray; Cpl S Haggerty, QDG, BFPO 16.

**Casuals:** G Easton, Henley-in-Arden, West Midlands; Maureen Findley, Rhyader, Powys; Mr K Laing, Redcar, Yorkshire.



## DIARY

**April 7-8: Convoy For Heroes** at Prestwold Hall in Leicestershire. Booking is now open and the organisers are aiming to assemble 1,000 vehicles for a new attempt at the Guinness World Record for longest Land Rover convoy. Contact Patricia Stoner on 07850 428821 or visit [www.convoy4heroes.org.uk](http://www.convoy4heroes.org.uk) for more information.

**April 21: 72 Engineer Regiment** Freedom Parade, Birkenhead.

**April 25: ANZAC Day.**

**May 12: British Military Train 1945-1990 – The 2012 Berliner Tribute.** In celebration of the calm professionalism of railway people, civilian and military, a steam locomotive will head a train of 1960s' carriages including a dining car from Berlin to Hanover and back. Fares start at £90 with proceeds going to The Royal British Legion in Berlin. There will also be a pre-train party in the city on May 11. For reservations and further details contact [militarytrain2012@gmail.com](mailto:militarytrain2012@gmail.com) or call Neil Howard on 07982 786529.

**Until further notice: The Lord Ashcroft Gallery: Extraordinary Heroes.** The world's largest collection of Victoria and George Crosses. Imperial War Museum, Lambeth Road, London SE1 6HZ.



## DIRECTORY

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**Armed Forces Humanist Association:** [www.armedforceshumanists.org.uk](http://www.armedforceshumanists.org.uk)

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**Army Welfare Service:** 01980 615975; [www.army.mod.uk/welfare-support/welfare-support.aspx](http://www.army.mod.uk/welfare-support/welfare-support.aspx)

**Army Families Federation:** 01264 382324; mil 94391 2324; [www.aff.org.uk](http://www.aff.org.uk)

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**National Gulf Veterans' and Families' Association Office:** 24-hour helpline 0845 257 4853; [www.ngvfa.org.uk](http://www.ngvfa.org.uk)

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**Remount:** 01451 850 341; [www.remount.net](http://www.remount.net)

**Royal British Legion:** [www.britishlegion.org.uk](http://www.britishlegion.org.uk)

**RBL Industries Vocational Assessment Centre:** 01622 795900; [www.rbli.co.uk](http://www.rbli.co.uk)

**SSAFA Forces Help:** 0845 1300 975; [www.ssafa.org.uk](http://www.ssafa.org.uk)

**Service Personnel and Veterans Agency:** 0800 169 2277 (from the UK); 0044 1253 866043 (from overseas)

**The Not Forgotten Association:** 020 7730 2400; [www.nfassociation.org](http://www.nfassociation.org)



## INTELLIGENCE

The following Army Briefing Notes, Defence Internal Briefs and Defence Information Notices can be found online at [www.armynet.mod.uk](http://www.armynet.mod.uk)

**ABN 11/12:** The Army Women's Network

**ABN 13/12:** Uniform to work day

**ABN 14/12:** Service Families Accommodation – improvements to the application process

**ABN15/12:** Future Armed Forces pension scheme, protection of accrued rights

**ABN 16/12:** The role of Team Army and sponsorship of Army sport

**ABN 17/12:** Enlistment into the Adjutant General's Corps (Military Provost Guard Service)

**ABN 18/12:** Army literacy and numeracy policy

**ABN 19/12:** 2012 Armed Forces' pay review body award

**ABN 20/12:** Berlin Infantry Brigade Memorial Trust Fund

**DIB 06/12:** London's preparations for the Olympic Games

**DIB 07/12:** Pension rights accrued in the existing Armed Forces pension schemes

**DIB 08/12:** Launch of the Defence Safety and Environment Authority

**DIB 09/12:** Launch of new single government website, [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)

**DIB 10/12:** Transforming defence – new commercial management partner for Defence Business Services

**DIB 11/12:** Transforming defence – update on future management options for the Defence Infrastructure Organisation

**DIB 12/12:** 2nd PUS Jon Day confirmed as new chairman of the joint intelligence committee

**DIB 13/12:** Head of the civil service writes to all staff about the proposed final agreement for a new 2015 civil service pension scheme

**DIB 14/12:** Armed Forces Pay Award 2012

**DIN 2012DIN01-077:** Travel by spouses/civil partners at public expense in connection with official visits

**DIN 2012DIN01-075:** Relocation of the Ministry of Defence medical assessment programme

**DIN 2012DIN01-074:** BR3 – issue of February 2012 edition

**DIN 2012DIN01-073:** Advance command and staff course

**DIN 2012DIN01-072:** The Ruth Carter Prize for Nurses and the Eliza Mackenzie Prize for Student Nurses

**DIN 2012DIN01-070:** Pension tax relief – lifetime allowance and fixed protection

**DIN 2012DIN01-069:** Day of prayer for the Armed Forces, June 28

**DIN 2012DIN01-068:** Mutual Support – Armed Forces multiple sclerosis national support group

**DIN 2012DIN01-067:** New average property



price list

**DIN 2012DIN01-066:** School attendance and Armed Forces support to Op Olympics

**DIN 2012DIN01-065:** Changes to the risk management process for civilian personnel travelling on departmental business

**DIN 2012DIN01-063:** Rights accrued in Armed Forces pension scheme 1975 and Armed Forces pension scheme 2005

**DIN 2012DIN01-062:** The Operations Welfare Fund

**DIN 2012DIN01-060:** Assimilation of assistant technical telecommunications officers into the broader banded structure

**DIN 2012DIN01-058:** Revised procedures for the JPA transmission of Army officer appraisals to the Army Personnel Centre

**DIN 2012DIN01-057:** Changes to PAX scheme effective from January 1, 2012

**DIN 2012DIN02-005:** Procedure for demand and issue of cadet force adult volunteer identity cards

**DIN 2012DIN02-004:** Unit name change of Defensive Information Operations to Joint Cyber Unit (Corsham)

**DIN 2012DIN02-003:** National security vetting – capping

**DIN 2012DIN02-002:** National security vetting – extension of validity periods

**DIN 2012DIN02-001:** Labelling of STRAP/TK packages

**DIN 2012DIN03-009:** Private security companies – MoD policy

**DIN 2012DIN04-047:** Equipment tables, scales and schedules

**DIN 2012DIN04-046:** Accommodation booking in HMNB Clyde – priority classification

**DIN 2012DIN04-045:** Aircrew corrective vision

service – possible gap in service

**DIN 2012DIN04-044:** Management of land non-ionising radiation hazards to personnel

**DIN 2012DIN04-043:** Workshop equipment inspections

**DIN 2012DIN04-042:** Urgent operational requirements standing instruction version 7

**DIN 2012DIN04-041:** Framework contracts for the supply of commercial publications to the MoD

**DIN 2012DIN04-040:** Declaration of BID/1750 (also known as BIFID) as being obsolete by Crypto Services for Defence

**DIN 2012DIN04-039:** Defence general munitions project team/munitions technical publications – convergence and rationalisation

**DIN 2012DIN04-038:** Guidance for the use of POT code 102 on Project Phoenix booking system during the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games

**DIN 2012DIN04-037:** Declaration of obsolete equipment – various Rascal acoustics and Clansman items deemed out of service date/unsupported

**DIN 2012DIN04-036:** Confirmed out of service date – steerable trailers

**DIN 2012DIN04-035:** Rel 2 Log NEC pre-notice to archive and terminate indeterminate applications and request help on those under investigation

**DIN 2012DIN04-034:** Equipment tables, scales and schedules

**DIN 2012DIN04-033:** Obsolete DS&TE PT controlled test and measurement equipment

**DIN 2012DIN04-032:** Introduction of new ultrasonic flaw detector equipment into service

**DIN 2012DIN05-013:** Defence rules on the personal use of the MoD's official telephones

**DIN 2012DIN05-012:** Contact with

parliamentarians

**DIN 2012DIN05-011:** Review and disposal of material held within the secret store in the MoD main archive

**DIN 2012DIN05-010:** Relocation of HTPT

**DIN 2012DIN05-009:** How to commission support and services provided by the Institute of Naval Medicine

**DIN 2012DIN05-008:** Military Aviation Authority – operating model

**DIN 2012DIN06-013:** Launch of the Defence Safety and Environment Authority

**DIN 2012DIN06-012:** Cross-government contract for the supply of first aid at work training by St John Ambulance

**DIN 2012DIN06-011:** Revised defence land ranges safety publications

**DIN 2012DIN06-010:** Contractor-operated MoD explosives facilities or activities – explosives licensing requirements

**DIN 2012DIN06-009:** Updates to JSP 375 – health and safety handbook

**DIN 2012DIN07-050:** Casualty procedures – visiting officer training course (Army)

**DIN 2012DIN07-049:** Joint Equality and Diversity Training Centre – courses 2012-2013

**DIN 2012DIN07-048:** Joint Service alpine meet

**DIN 2012DIN07-047:** The provision of civilian contractor supplies simulated press

**DIN 2012DIN07-046:** Leadership and management – professional accreditation through the University College Plymouth

**DIN 2012DIN07-045:** 2012/2013 Tri-Service chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear defence training

**DIN 2012DIN07-044:** Exercise Canary Gold

Continued on page 62

NO. 845

## JUST HOW OBSERVANT ARE YOU?

WIN  
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TEN details have been changed on this photograph of REME Light Aid Detachment vehicle mechanics repairing a quad bike at FOB Shawqat, Afghanistan.

Circle the differences in the left image and send the panel to **HOAY 845, Soldier**, Ordnance Barracks, Government Road,

Aldershot, Hampshire GU11 2DU by April 30. A photocopy is acceptable but only one entry per person may be submitted. First correct entry drawn after the closing date will win £100; the second and third will receive £25 gift vouchers.

The results will be announced in the

June issue.

**February's competition:** First correct entry drawn at random and winner of the £100 was Ms C O'Brien, Farnham, Surrey.

**Runners-up:** P Duff, 25 Trg Sp Regt RLC, Deepcut, Surrey and Mr C Wells, Isleworth, Middlesex.





**DIN 2012DIN07-043:** Joining instructions for personnel attending CBRNDC courses at Triumph Squadron, HMS *Raleigh*

**DIN 2012DIN07-042:** Update of military annual training tests – test 3 instructor

**DIN 2012DIN07-041:** Air Warfare Centre Cranwell – courses available to the wider defence audience

**DIN 2012DIN07-040:** Joint Medical Command schedule of courses 2012/13

**DIN 2012DIN07-039:** Introduction of Joint Command and Control Support Programme user training courseware

**DIN 2012DIN07-038:** Volunteering for operational linguist duties

**DIN 2012DIN07-037:** All-arms unit fire safety managers, warden, extinguisher maintenance awareness trainer

**DIN 2012DIN08-002:** Change of US currency banking arrangements

**DIN 2012DIN09-010:** The Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal – changes to official wear date

**DIN 2012DIN09-009:** Accumulated Campaign Service Medal 2011 – administration and criteria amendment

**DIN 2012DIN10-010:** HQ Army Rifle Association courses

**DIN 2012DIN10-008:** The Combined Services Chess Championships

## WEB WATCH

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**DIN 2012DIN10-006:** Welsh 1,000-metre peaks race, June 9

**DIN 2012DIN10-005:** Army inter-unit cricket cup competition



## REUNIONS

**The Queen's Royal Lancers, North West Branch:**

Annual dinner on April 14 in Blackpool. All ex-6/5 QRL, 17/21 L and QRL welcome. Further details from Ned Kelly on 01772 324795 or via email at [mike.kelly@talktalk.net](mailto:mike.kelly@talktalk.net)

**79 Port Enabling Sqn (formerly 79 Railway Sqn)**

are disbanding on April 26. Former members are invited to attend a parade. For further information contact Maj Chris Bowen on 023 8066 4314, mil 94273 8314 or by email at [chris.bowen723@mod.uk](mailto:chris.bowen723@mod.uk)

**Junior Leaders Regiment, Royal Engineers**

**Cassino Troop 1989-1990** is looking for lost members for a reunion scheduled for late April. If you were a member of the troop and are interested in attending please contact Peter King at 4 Turner Close, Catterick Garrison, North Yorkshire DL9 3SP or email [peterliamking@live.co.uk](mailto:peterliamking@live.co.uk)

**Army Air Corps Association:** Reunion dinner at the Victory Services Club, London, on May 19. Serving ranks, AAC veterans, association members and partners welcome. For more information email the regimental secretary at [AACHQ-RHQ-RegtSec@mod.uk](mailto:AACHQ-RHQ-RegtSec@mod.uk) or telephone 01264 784426.

**Annual parade and service of the Combined Cavalry Old Comrades Association:**

Serving and retired members of the cavalry are invited to muster on Sunday, May 20 in Hyde Park. The parade steps off at 1055 and the salute is expected to be taken by a senior member of the royal family. Those attending are invited to form up with their regiments on The Broad Walk between 0930 and 1030. A limited number of wheelchairs pushed by cavalry-badged cadets are available but applications should be made through regimental home headquarters. For further information contact Maj Stretton on 01753 755132.

**British Army and RAF rally crews (from the 1970s and 1980s):**

A reunion will be held at the Park Inn, Telford on May 26. Anyone who was involved with Service motor sport and is interested in attending should contact the organiser, Les Dalton, on 0033 545 240 763 or by email at [les.dalton@orange.fr](mailto:les.dalton@orange.fr)

The **78th Artillery Clerks' reunion and association dinner** will be held at Larkhill from June 15 to 17. For further details contact Andy Tibble on 07793 266705, via email at [andy@tibble86.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:andy@tibble86.fsnet.co.uk) or visit [www.artyclerkassn.org](http://www.artyclerkassn.org)

**RMP Memorial Parade** at the National Memorial Arboretum. This event will be held on Saturday, June 16 at 1115. In 2013 the date will return to the first Saturday of June. Email [rhqmp@btinternet.com](mailto:rhqmp@btinternet.com) for further information.

**10 Trg Bn REME, Bordon:** Reunion for all serving and former recovery mechanic SNCOs to be held in the sergeants' mess on June 29-30. For further details contact Sgt Simmo Sieminski at [7739siemi@armymail.mod.uk](mailto:7739siemi@armymail.mod.uk) or on 01420 485557.

**Crewman/door gunner** reunion on September

27 at the Victory Services Club in London. £40 per person. For details contact Cpl James Price at 8 Flight AAC on 94475 2731 or at [aviationcrewman@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:aviationcrewman@yahoo.co.uk)

David Sykes is planning a reunion for all members of **4 Sqn, 22 Signal Regiment** who served between 1970 and 1975. Considers September/October as a suitable time as hotel prices should be favourable. Anybody interested can contact him by email at [churchill422@sky.com](mailto:churchill422@sky.com)

**56th Signal Squadron (V) (Eastbourne):**

Reunion dinner will be held at the Cavendish Hotel on October 20. Application forms can be obtained from the UHO either by email at [39sr-56-paysNCO@mod.uk](mailto:39sr-56-paysNCO@mod.uk) or in writing from SHO, TA Centre, Seaside, Eastbourne, East Sussex BN22 7NL. Telephone 01323 728116.

**Birgelen Veterans Association:** The 12th anniversary reunion will be held at the Cavendish Hotel, Torquay from September 28 to October 1. Bookings will be restricted to the first 100 applicants. Members wishing to attend should apply via the association's website at [www.birgelenvets.org](http://www.birgelenvets.org)



## SEARCHLINE

**Tony Levy**, ex-Royal Signals (1972-1981), is trying to locate the **commemorative wall plaque** he was presented with in recognition of his time served as a permanent staff instructor on **Exercise Snow Queen**. The former sapper is happy to pay any reasonable expenses incurred in returning the item to him. Contact 07860 715603.

**Operation Motorman:** A documentary is being made for UTV, a regional television channel in Northern Ireland. The programme makers, who aim to complete the project for the 40th anniversary in July this year, would like to hear from anyone willing to contribute. Contact Vinny Cunningham from Open Reel Productions at [info@northlandbroadcast.net](mailto:info@northlandbroadcast.net)

Richard Wareing is looking for information from current or former members of any **Royal Horse Artillery** unit, whether operating now, suspended or disbanded. He is particularly interested in personal accounts from barracks and operations for research prior to writing an historical account. Email [Richard.wareing79@gmail.com](mailto:Richard.wareing79@gmail.com)

Dan Mills, author of *Sniper One*, is looking for Servicemen and women who served on **Op Telic** to contribute to a new book about the conflict. Personnel with interesting or emotive stories are asked to email [dmillsiraqbook@gmail.com](mailto:dmillsiraqbook@gmail.com) outlining their experiences.

Brett Forman is researching the late **Terrence Frank Hall**, born in Fulham on July 17, 1932. The former Serviceman grew up in London and is thought to have served with the Royal Signals in Cyprus. The last four digits of his Army number were 2269. Anyone with information is asked to contact Mr Foreman by email at [gforman21@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:gforman21@hotmail.co.uk)

The **Aldershot Garrison warrant officers and sergeants' mess** is closing and moving to Evelyn Woods Road. Any previous member who has donated a presentation to the mess can claim it back from April 1 to September 1. Contact WO1 McCabe, HQ Aldershot Garrison, on 01252 348209.





Picture: Steve Dock

**Aggravating factors:** Dripping taps or broken lights may not seem like the biggest problems in the world but they can be the final straw for Service families

## Hard lessons in housing maintenance

IT'S that time of year again – postings looming for a summer move. I tried to explain to a civvy the other day that in some ways I quite like relocating. Before long I get itchy feet and start clearing a house out.

However, there are lots of things that I don't like about moving – namely the uncertainty about where we are going, what it will be like, where my youngest will go to school and whether I will manage to wash behind the fridge before the cleaners enter our old property.

On this occasion, the first place that needed my attention was the desk. This always presents a challenge as my admin skills are certainly not the best around.

I like to pretend that I am so organised at work that it simply leaves me no time to be tidy at home, but my blatant flouting of the office's clear desk policy belies that claim somewhat.

While cleaning, I found a letter informing me that I had missed my first annual gas inspection appointment.

It asked for confirmation of another available date and whether I preferred a morning or afternoon call.

The suggested visiting time was the following day. Doh!

But surely no one would be daft enough to send someone to a house that hadn't confirmed an appointment – right?

Wrong. When I returned home 24 hours later I had been “red carded”.

On the one hand I suppose I deserved this fate. But on the other, I couldn't help feeling somewhat annoyed that a gas fitter's time had been wasted on a booking that had not been of my making or confirmed as being suitable.

Penalise me for not replying to the letter by all means but not for missing an appointment that I didn't make.

I now need to get the problem rectified as soon as possible because, until I do, we will not be allowed to make any routine maintenance requests.

I have therefore added to my list of recommendations for the next generation of estate contract bidders “send sensible letters and either await or chase a response”.

This feedback proved useful when I took part in a briefing about life in Service Families Accommodation (SFA) recently with the three remaining hopefuls for its maintenance contract.

Understanding the pressures on British Army personnel and their loved ones is vital if we are to receive even the most basic customer service which takes into account our unique lifestyle.

The bidders in question already had some form of connection with the defence estate so my advice should have provided few surprises but judging by the looks of astonishment and the shaking and nodding

of heads in equal measure, many attendees were educated by the session.

On being asked how they could ensure Service families get the support they deserve, I suggested the following:

- Do not promise what you cannot deliver. If in these economically challenged times you are being paid to provide a bronze service while we are being promised a gold one, be honest about it. We won't like it but we will understand.

- Stop classing SFA in the same category as social housing. There is nothing wrong with this type of accommodation or its occupants but Service homes are different. They are provided as part of a soldier's terms and conditions and should be recognised as such.

- Address people by their rank and with respect. They've earned it and in the military environment are used to it.

- Do what you say you're going to do. “I'll be back next week to finish the job”, “I'll phone when the parts are in”, “this will be the last time we have to fix it”, “we will be there in the morning”... if you can't do any of these things then just let us know. We will probably understand.


Finally, and possibly most importantly of all, the parting advice that I offered them was to appreciate that sometimes the smallest of things – a dripping tap or a blown light bulb – could represent a major issue for Army families.

Why? Because our soldier is deployed, the children aren't coping and often this is the final straw. ■

**‘Understanding the pressures on personnel is vital if families are to receive even the most basic customer service’**



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# reviews



## IN THE FRAME: APRIL'S ARTISTRY APPRAISED

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# VIVACIOUS VIEWING



## MISS BALA out now

THIS title centres on Laura (**Stephanie Sigman**), an aspiring beauty queen who finds herself on the slippery slope to depredation and crime after becoming involved with a ruthless gang. Described as an “explosive, riveting and thought-provoking thriller that grips like a vice”, *Miss Bala* certainly has all the hallmarks of a great action movie with drugs, women and urban violence. But as the title progresses the storyline becomes very blurred. Overall, this is an interesting feature boasting some good acting and sound action scenes. Worth watching.

## Rodge Tapply, ex-RE



## THE AWAKENING out now

BRITAIN is reeling from the First World War and Florence Cathcart (**Rebecca Hall**) has found her vocation disproving the existence of the supernatural. She is employed to explain the mysterious death of a pupil at a boys' preparatory school in Cumbria. Its staff are troubled by wartime experiences and some odd events have left their pupils feeling terrified. Despite her best efforts, Florence begins to doubt herself and is subject to a chilling episode. This movie is skin-crawling and disturbing and the final twist is delivered with a flourish by **Imelda Staunton**.

## Maj Neil Johnson, AAC



## 1911 REVOLUTION out now

AN historical drama based on the story of the Xinhai revolution which led to the deposing of the Qing Dynasty and subsequent creation of the Republic of China in 1912. This is a fascinating account of a pivotal moment in Chinese history. **Jackie Chan** is on great (if a little serious) form as the commander-in-chief of the revolution. He also directed this engaging and entertaining film. The battle scenes are suitably impressive and the feature has an epic feel to it. Not only does this celebrate the centenary of the revolution, it marks Chan's 100th movie.

## Cpl Jools Finch, MPGS



## HOUSE OF THE RISING SUN out April 2

RAY (**Dave Bautista** of WWE fame) is a former cop who takes the head security job at a mafia-run strip club and gambling den. He believes he is starting to get his life back on track when thieves commit a violent robbery leaving several dead. The police and mob think Ray is responsible so he risks his life to find the real offenders before they catch up with him. The film's plot is good with some strong performances but, with the main character played by an ex-wrestler, it was never going to be an Oscar-winning feature. That said, it is definitely worth a look.

## Daniel Crowder, civvy



## A MIDNIGHT CLEAR out April 16

THIS Second World War epic has been digitally remastered to mark its 20th anniversary. Based on a novel by **William Wharton**, it explains how a small intelligence unit of US soldiers sent on a reconnaissance mission to the Ardennes in 1944 forms an unlikely alliance with German troops. The title helped launch the careers of cast members **Ethan Hawke**, **Kevin Dillon** and **Gary Sinise** as they dispense some humanity in the midst of violence. This is a film that concentrates on the personal side of combat and yet feels very authentic.

## Tracey Phillips, Army wife



## MACHINE GUN PREACHER out now

IN this movie **Gerard Butler** plays a hard-drinking tough guy (Sam Childers) who finds religion and heads for East Africa to build an orphanage for civil war victims. It is based on the protagonist's real-life memoir *Another Man's War* but it is clear that for dramatic effect only the “best bits” have been used for the screen. Crusading Butler kills the bad guys while innocent children are rushed to safety. Directed by **Marc Forster** (*The Kite Runner*, *Quantum of Solace*), the title is aesthetically pleasing and engaging but you are left wishing you knew its full context.

## Joe Clapson, Soldier

## Interview: Joe Clapson

THIS month will see a superior and intimidating force take hold of cinemas everywhere; finally Rihanna has got her grip on the big screen.

But the result is far from the shallow dross we have come to expect from a recording artist's transfer to the world of script reading.

However, *Battleship* – inspired by the classic combat game of the same name – will get pulses of action-adventure fans racing for a variety of reasons other than the appearance of the Barbadian pop princess.

Featuring monstrous attacks across the seas, skies and land, its special effects are likely to stun.

Speaking exclusively to *Soldier*, director and producer Peter Berg explained his reasons for investing so much effort in the film.

“Being the son of a marine who was a naval historian, I grew up with boats and a love of the military,” the American said.

“A few years ago, I started thinking about the Battleship game as an entry point to making a movie about modern naval warfare with two reasonably matched fleets fighting each other.

“That inspired me to do it.”

The title's crowd-pleasing cast includes Liam Neeson, Taylor Kitsch, Brooklyn Decker and the aforementioned singer.

Written by brothers Jon and Erich Hoeber (*Red*), its plot centres on an international armada which attempts to defend Pearl Harbour from an alien race known as “The Regents”.

Kitsch takes the part of Lt Alex Hopper, a naval officer assigned to the USS *Jones*. With Decker as his therapist fiancée and Rihanna playing a petty officer, the cast aboard this film is certainly as diverse as it is intriguing.

“I enjoyed mixing things up and working with actors of different experience levels,” said Berg, who also has *Hancock* and *Friday Night Lights* to his name.

“I’m always looking to find people who haven’t quite broken out yet but possess real complexity.

“Here we have a balance of completely fresh faces like Rihanna and Decker along with veterans such as Neeson, who is quite simply incapable of delivering a bad performance.”

During filming Berg was given unprecedented access to vessels such as the legendary USS *Missouri* in addition to destroyers, nuclear carriers and submarines. Such heritage adds a distinct sense of realism to the alien invasion title.

“It’s going to be pretty cool to show all that on the screen,” Berg added.

From the outset, viewers will be left unequivocal that little expense was spared in the making of this movie. But the director is hopeful it will be worth the dollars.

“You should expect a big kick-ass adventure, guns the size of buildings, a really compelling story of heroism and a good time,” he said. ■



# Owls

OUT IN  
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APRIL 11

PICK OF THE MONTH: BATTLESHIP

## EXPLOSIVE STRIFE AT SEA

NAVAL HISTORY INSPIRES  
AWESOME SCI-FI ADVENTURE



# games

APRIL'S CONSOLE COLLECTION



PICK OF THE MONTH:

## BIOWARE'S MASS APPEAL

DEVELOPER CONTINUES WINNING RUN IN FRANCHISE'S  
GRIPPING THIRD INSTALMENT



**H**AVING never played any of the previous titles in this epic space-combat franchise, I really didn't know what to expect from *Mass Effect 3*.

As a huge fan of developers Bioware – an admiration that stems from the *Baldur's Gate* series – I was certain the brains behind this offering knew how to make a good story-driven game and they haven't disappointed.

The plot is instantly gripping and I was soon swept along in the action, losing all track of time.

Before the story unfolds, gamers have the option of tailoring the experience to match their style in this all-out galactic war.

I opted for the role-player, which accurately matches the approach of previous titles.

The action mode streamlines the cut scenes with pre-selected dialogue options, throwing in a mix of choices, while the story route makes combat very easy for those who are interested in the narrative but may struggle with playing the game.

The character you create is included in the sequences and you can watch your hero throughout the animated breaks in the adventure. This is nothing new but it proves to be enjoyable nonetheless.

In terms of gameplay I did have some initial concerns and the apparent limitations left me thinking "is that it?"

Thankfully new additions were introduced as I went along and it began to remind me of the *Ghost Recon*-style of manoeuvring.

The graphics hold up well on my ancient Xbox 360 and the cut scenes are certainly fun to watch and really add to the feel of the title and its storytelling element.

I would strongly advise Xbox players to install the game to their hard drive though as it is an almighty offering that is delivered on two discs.

The drama sometimes stuttered and spluttered on my old machine and a bit of effort beforehand will cut down on the lengthy loading times.

The acting talent is superb and includes Martin Sheen, Seth Green and Freddie Prinze Junior among the stellar cast, but I'll not spoil it by revealing the former's role.

After some research I soon discovered *Mass Effect 3* has been carefully refined and draws influences from many areas to deliver a solid stand alone title.

Newcomers will find something to hold their attention and are well advised to track down the franchise's back catalogue to sample some of the early adventures.

There is no doubt this game is big and it was only after I got three hours in that the sheer magnitude of it hit me.

I was piloting a ship trying to bring together the races of the cosmos to fight off an apocalyptic alien. How cool is that on a Monday night?

In summary, this is a thoroughly impressive offering that will prove a sure-fire hit with fans of this exciting series.

My advice is simple: use up some of that extra leave you were saving, invest some money in the game and immerse yourself in it for a week. This is not one to miss. ■

# VIRTUAL PLAYGROUND

## FIFA STREET

for Xbox 360/PS3

PREMIER League managers often champion the art of "winning ugly". While such qualities are admired in the professional ranks, they are frankly frowned upon in *Fifa Street*. This skills obsessed spin-off is all about tricks, flicks and beating your opponent in style and with a mountain of moves to master the enjoyment is endless. Top stars from the world's biggest clubs step up in a variety of tournaments as this title offers a welcome diversion from the mainstream. But try as it might, it is no substitute for the real thing.

**Richard Long, Soldier**



## DIRT 3 COMPLETE EDITION

for Xbox 360/PS3

THIS is a fun rally game that is slightly biased towards the arcade end of the spectrum. With over 100 tracks and the ability to race in cars spanning more than five decades it should keep you entertained for weeks. The graphics are amazing, especially the damage simulation model which highlights your driving errors. A variety of game modes – ranging from the *Dirt* tour to rally cross – add to the fun and you even have the option of uploading a 30-second clip of your rallying prowess directly on to YouTube. Buy this if you enjoy a good old-fashioned racing title.

**SSgt Graeme Russell, Scottish Tpt Regt**



## ADVANCED STRIKE FIGHTERS

for Xbox 360/PS3/PC

FOR a game that associates itself with *Jane's*, this lacks technical accuracy and is far from being a real flight simulator. The approach is aimed at arcade players and with rockets and missiles that quickly regenerate there is no need to conserve ammunition. It took a while to get used to the controls but once mastered the game was far too short. Dogfights and ground attacks are quite lazy and each mission was a near repeat of the previous sortie. There are also a few technical glitches to overcome and on the whole this is one to avoid.

**Sgt Wallace Stephenson, Int Corps**



## SSX

for Xbox 360/PS3

SNOWBOARDING franchise *SSX* makes a welcome return having last been seen on the virtual slopes of the PS2. This title is sure to attract a new generation of adrenalin junkies and with nine obstacle-laden mountains to race, perform tricks and survive on, there is plenty of longevity to the game. Some of the death-defying moves ask severe questions of the laws of physics but such minor inconveniences fail to detract from the undoubted fun on offer. With a raft of online multiplayer options available, *SSX* can rightly enjoy its return to the limelight.

**Andrew Simms, Soldier**



## OPERATION RACCOON CITY

for Xbox 360/PS3/PC

FANS of the *Resident Evil* franchise are in for a bumper year in 2012. The full-blown sixth instalment in the series is due for release in November. *Operation Raccoon City* is a pleasant appetiser ahead of the main course and comes as a combat-heavy third-person shooter. There are striking familiarities to the second and third chapters and the storyline is basic at best, while the presentation is far from polished. The artificial intelligence of fellow squad members is somewhat limited but overall this is an impressive addition to the triumphant fold.

**Joe Clapson, Soldier**



## STREET FIGHTER X TEKKEN

for Xbox 360/PS3/PC

AT last the worlds of *Street Fighter* and *Tekken* meet allowing you to settle the arguments over which is best in one all-encompassing battle. The game has the usual arcade and training modes, along with trial and mission settings to keep things interesting. The tutorial walks players through the new features, while special moves, cross techniques and super arts are all quickly explained. The real strength is in the multiplayer option, but this becomes disappointing online. In summary, an excellent game for peppering your mates with headbutts over a Naafi break.

**Cpl Adam Jackson, 3 Para**





# mus

APRIL'S SOUND GARDEN



PICK OF THE MONTH:

## HISTORY REPEATING

MILITARY WIVES RETURN TO TOP SPOT AS CHART  
CAREER CONTINUES TO FLOURISH



# TUNES FOR THE TROOPS

Review: Richard Long

**A**FTER storming the charts to claim the prestigious Christmas number one late last year, the Military Wives have continued their amazing run of success with the release of their debut album.

The singers recorded the 11-track collection on the back of their festive hit *Wherever You Are*, which sold a staggering 700,000 copies and became the fastest-selling UK charity single in the 21st century.

And the winning formula has been repeated second time round as *In My Dreams* leapfrogged the latest offering from rock legend Bruce Springsteen to hit top spot in time for Mother's Day.

Choirmaster Gareth Malone has been thrilled by the popularity of the album and was staggered to see history repeating itself in the charts.

The television star said: "Once was like a dream, but now I'm starting to wonder whether this is actually happening."

"These women's singing has lifted the spirits of a nation."

"I'm proud to have been able to introduce the power of music to the performers on this album who, in turn, are reaching out to the military communities across the UK through the power of song."

*In My Dreams* features stirring renditions of Bob Dylan's *Make You Feel Love*, Coldplay's *Fix You* and *With or Without You* by U2.

Their Christmas hit is another obvious inclusion and composer Paul Mealer penned the title track especially for the album.

The choir performs the song alongside *X Factor* finalist Pte Jonjo Kerr (3 Yorks), who appears as a soloist.

The release also aims to create a lasting legacy among the Service community.

A donation of £1 from every sale will go towards the Military Wives Choirs Foundation, which will enable other women to set up and run their own groups.

Since its formation in January, the organisation has grown from supporting five singing troupes to more than 30.

This album was clearly compiled to pull at the heart-strings but the sentiment behind the project is not in doubt.

The array of cover versions have been lovingly recorded and it is easy to see why this was released in time for Mother's Day.

While it may not be to everyone's liking, *In My Dreams* should be celebrated as a symbol of the outstanding impact the choir has had on the military community. ■

## Wrecking Ball by Bruce Springsteen

THE Boss returns with the 17th studio album of a career stretching back into the mists of time. However, this is *Wrecking Ball* by name but not by nature and the heady days of *Born In The USA* seem a million miles away. Unfortunately, I found this to be uninspiring in its entirety and is an album lacking in any bite or energy. Touring on the back of this record, **Springsteen** will no doubt fill every venue he plays due to a solid supporter base who love his older stuff, but if he is relying on this effort to put bums on seats he will be disappointed. Buy it if you're a fan, if not pass it by.



## Mo Morris, ex-RLC

### Happy to You by Miike Snow

SWEDISH-American production trio **Miike Snow** largely slipped under the radar with the release of their self-titled debut. The group's Scandanavian pairing are probably more famous for penning the **Britney Spears** smash *Toxic*, but *Happy To You* should provide them with greater credibility in their own right. Tracks such as *The Wave* and *Padding Out* build solidly on the electro-pop sound established first time round. On occasions the quirky effects can distract from the enjoyment but on the whole this is a relaxing affair that should push this outfit further towards the mainstream.



## Richard Long, Soldier

### Secret Symphony by Katie Melua

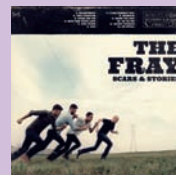
WHEN **Katie Melua** played London's O2 Arena, *The Times* declared that her voice was "rarely short of astounding" and her fifth studio album – *Secret Symphony* – is an exquisite collection of songs that perfectly showcases her unique and instantly recognisable sound. There is a distinct undertone of country music to be found here and at times a Dixieland melody runs throughout the album. When you add the almost hypnotic vocals of Melua on top this creates a near perfect fit and it is very difficult not to enjoy the end result. Overall, this is a thoroughly good offering that is beautifully sung and superbly recorded.



## Rodge Tapply, ex-RE

## Scars and Stories by The Fray

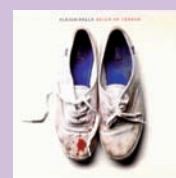
DENVER quartet **The Fray** have been likened to bands such as **Coldplay** (a long way to go there methinks) and **Keane** (that's more like it) but this piano pop road has been well trodden before and *Scars and Stories* offers nothing new. It also fails to provide any tracks that stand alone as the record maintains a similar vibe throughout. *Heartbeat* and *48 To Go* are two of the more pleasing offerings but *Be Still* is one to avoid due to its serious lack of balls. This may fall short of 2005's *How to Save A Life* but overall it's a decent album and well worth a listen, especially for established fans.



## Ray Kalaker, ex-RE

### Reign of Terror by Sleigh Bells

THIS second album from New Yorkers **Sleigh Bells** is a somewhat confused collection marketed in an equally confusing package. The record inlay is emblazoned with words from title track *True Shred Guitar*. However not so much as a bar of real shred is audible. I was expecting **Slayer** but what I got was the **Ting-Tings** meets **The White Stripes**. Nevertheless, this is an intelligent offering and **Alexis Krauss's** delicately feminine vocals float over synthetic effects that are cemented together with quiet but crunchy guitar. Sitting firmly in the indie sphere it may appeal to fans of electronica.



## Capt Matt Walpole, PWRR

### Making Mirrors by Gotye

BORN in Belgium and raised in Melbourne, **Gotye** – real name Wally de Backer – has finally got his break after tinkering with different sounds in Australia for years. This third studio album has been thrown under the spotlight due to its absorbing and critically acclaimed heartbreak song, *Somebody That I Used to Know*, which attracted 62 million YouTube hits. The album as a whole doesn't stick to one genre, with jumps from smooth harmonies to Turkish drums, thumb pianos and 80s pop. The vocals and instrumental pieces are refreshingly unique and mark the born performer out as a genius who should be embraced.



## Joe Clapson, Soldier



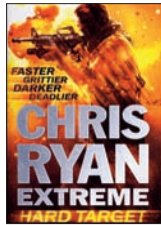
# RECONNOITRING READING

Interview: Sarah Goldthorpe

## Extreme Hard Target

by Chris Ryan

FULL of the military clichés you would expect of a **Chris Ryan** novel, the adventures of ex-warrant officer Joe Gardener read like the script of a big-screen blockbuster. With a plot boasting drugs, nuclear weapons and a damsel in distress, *Extreme Hard Target* traverses the globe as its protagonist tackles the Russian mafia and senior Iranian officers. The action is fast paced throughout, if not occasionally a little bizarre – such as a skirmish with a one-armed man who possesses the ability to control power tools and cars with his mind.

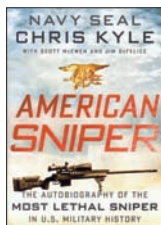


**Sgt Wallace Stephenson, Int Corps**

## American Sniper

by Chris Kyle

THIS autobiography recounts the exploits of **Chris Kyle**, the soldier credited with the most US sniper kills of all time. It is written by a military man and doesn't pull any punches. Indeed, the author concedes early on "I only wish I'd killed more", but don't let this gung-ho, tobacco-chewing Texan attitude put you off. *American Sniper* is technically detailed with whole pages dedicated to descriptions of equipment. Kyle also explains his hatred for anyone trying to kill Americans or their allies which, despite a feeling of political incorrectness, will strike a chord.



**WO2 Ian Barraclough, REME**

## Seeking Gaddafi

by Daniel Kawczynski

THIS book superbly captures the despotic nature of Gaddafi and ultimately explains why his regime was doomed. The author – an expert on the dictator, his crimes and Libya under his rule – charts how the deceased, through sheer ineptitude, lost any goodwill amongst his North African neighbours. However, Gaddafi is also presented as having been a master of survival, an individual who managed to engineer a reconciliation with the West post 9/11. This title is essential reading if you want to understand how difficult it will be to build a new Libya.



**Capt Neil Higgins, AGC (ETS) (V)**

## Bad Company

by Chantelle Taylor

EARLY on in this account of "a woman face to face with the Taliban", the author talks about her rage at the media's decision to focus on the death of a female in an incident in which three men also fell. She makes the valid point that gender is irrelevant to being a soldier or dying as one. Overall, *Bad Company* is a muddled affair – swapping constantly between the writer's life previous to the Army and the events which unfolded during her tour of Afghanistan. This book would be far better if presented as either a straight autobiography or historical account.



**Capt Douglas Searle, RLC**

## Woman at the Front

by Sylvia Wild

I FOUND this book surprisingly intriguing; the Second World War viewed from the perspective of a young Auxiliary Territorial Service typist is a refreshing change from the male-dominated mainstream. The author recalls working alongside Royal Engineer staff officers and was involved in the planning for D-Day and the subsequent drive across France, Belgium and into Germany. Her accounts of living in billets among the French and Belgians, while the sappers rebuilt the railways, roads and bridges, recall an often overlooked aspect of the conflict.



**Maj Mike Peters, AAC**

## The Confusion of Command

by D Snow & M Pottle

THIS all-too-brief book on Lt Gen Sir Thomas D'Oyly Snow (great grandfather of co-author **Dan Snow**) describes the officer's execution of the retreat from Mons in 1914 and the second Battle of Ypres without meaningful situational awareness. Sending a cyclist to confirm enemy and Allied dispositions appears comical, but the ensuing casualties were the consequence of the confusion of command. With only basic information, it is easy to see why the British dug in and explains the inability of leaders to conduct manoeuvres outside of trench warfare.



**Lt Col Andy Gladen, RE**

**H**E MAY have survived a suicide bomb attack but when the *Daily Telegraph's* former Baghdad correspondent decided to write a book about the invasion of Iraq, that luck could easily have expired.

Producing a title that would not repeat existing accounts of the widely criticised mission would be a considerable challenge.

But after two-and-a-half years of detailed research and interviews, Jack Fairweather appears to have succeeded.

The new author's insightful account of Tony Blair's "giddy plunge" into conflict follows the actions of a small group of British Army officers and negotiators to give a gripping picture of the political and military challenges faced by the UK after 2003.

Speaking to *Soldier*, the journalist explained why he took on the task of penning *A War of Choice: Britain in Iraq 2003-9*.

"I wanted this book to be about some of the extraordinary roles taken on by British personnel," Fairweather commented.

"Some of this was written about at the time, but the material had never been pulled together in a narrative that allows readers to switch between decision making at Number Ten and the battlefields of Iraq.

"I didn't set out to write a didactic, angry account about how things had gone wrong," the writer added.

"I wanted to balance the bigger picture with soldiers and diplomats in action.

"The book needed to be from the point of view of troops; to show things from their perspective. I felt that by telling their stories, I was able to balance larger criticisms of the war and not make it anti-military for the most who did a completely heroic job in strained and difficult circumstances."

By speaking extensively to those involved – including an in-depth interview with insurgent leader Ahmed al-Fartosi – Fairweather found himself empathising with the dilemma that British commander Maj Gen Jonathan Shaw faced during his "unpleasant" ceasefire negotiations with the Mehdi Army.

"It was morally testing to hear someone describing acts of brutality and how they would arrange for ambushes," the journalist recalled. "I had spoken to officers involved in doing that deal so understanding [Fartosi's] motivations was challenging intellectually. It was human nature at its most raw."

As well as attracting praise from literature heavyweights such as Blair's biographer Anthony Seldon, *A War of Choice* appears to have won the respect of those contained in its pages – a far from easy task considering the significant level of criticism it presents.

"I felt the challenge was to avoid taking cheap shots at the officers involved but to try and explain their thinking and, in the process, reveal some of the deeper problems facing them," Fairweather said. "There were quite a few heroes of the war and it was a great pleasure to write about those individuals, from NCOs to four-star generals."

By focusing on military personnel, the writer reminds his readers how the committed work of soldiers can so easily be overshadowed by the political decisions that have gone before. ■



# books

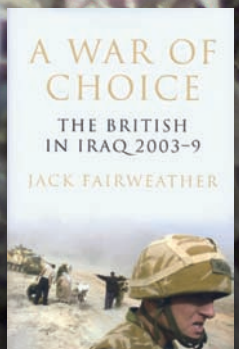
APRIL'S  
ANTHOLOGY



PICK OF THE MONTH:

## A CHOICE ACCOUNT

POWERFUL DEBUT SHINES LIGHT ON HEROIC  
ACTIONS BEHIND CONTROVERSIAL INVASION



Telic tales: Published by  
Jonathan Cape in hardback  
and as an e-book, Jack  
Fairweather's *A War of  
Choice* is out now



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## GO-GETTING GOGGLES

THESE sleek *Transcend* gazers are the ultimate gadget for extreme sport enthusiasts. Combining GPS technology with a head-mounted display system, the James Bond-esque kit has a predictably hefty price tag of almost £300. The goggles feature SPPX lenses and interact with Google maps. Buy at [www.red5.co.uk](http://www.red5.co.uk)



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## WIN... A MEMORY-MAP ADVENTURER 3500



**SOLDIER** has teamed up with navigation technology firm Memory-Map to give away an *Adventurer 3500*. To be in with a chance of winning, tell us where Col Robert Jordan began his walk. Answers should be sent to our new address or [comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk](mailto:comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk) before April 30. Readers can buy the unit at a special price of £275 until May 31. Call 0844 811 0950 and quote the code SOLDIERMAG2012.

TOP



Review: Col Robert Jordan

**W**HEN I undertook Exercise Home Stretch – a sponsored 500-mile walk from my final posting in Germany back to the UK – it had been several years since I had regularly used a GPS.

Predictably, technology had moved on.

And with a display that is clear in all conditions and a highly responsive touch screen, the well-sized *Adventurer 3500* (RRP £380) demonstrated just how much.

This satellite-based navigation system provides scrolling and zooming functions at the flick of a finger but requires the precision of its stylus for most features.

During my trek I found that I needed to “zero” – or touch calibrate – the unit quite often so that screen taps were accurate.

It would have also been better to view its maps in landscape as well as portrait.

But start-up was faster than my TomTom and I liked the system's “safety catch” concept of a slide control to ignite the power.

This makes it harder to switch on by accident and waste battery life.

The *3500* can comfortably withstand six hours of continuous use but eight is a gamble.

I learnt this the hard way and if it shuts down accidentally, you risk losing data.

While of good solid build, this GPS was not quite rugged enough to survive my drop test.

After losing grip of it from a height, the navigator fell face down on to a road – a pretty stiff test for any bit of technology. The display shattered and it was game over.

Lesson identified: always use the wrist strap and silicone sleeve. A lanyard might also be a useful accessory.

All in all, the *Adventurer 3500* did everything claimed on its box and what you get for your money is first-class. I'd definitely buy one. ■

[www.memory-map.co.uk/adventurergps](http://www.memory-map.co.uk/adventurergps)



# ear

TECHNOLOGY  
FOR TREKKERS



PICK OF THE MONTH:

## **ADVENTURER 3500 GPS**

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# SOLDIERSPORT

Picture: Graeme Main

**TROPHY TRAIL:** GOAL HUNGRY WOMEN FLY HIGH AS ARMY RUN RIOT AT INTER-SERVICES LEVEL





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**Ready for action:** The Army continued their preparations for this month's Inter-Services showdown with a 27-25 defeat against Northampton Saints

# Reds primed for Twickenham test

**Report: Richard Long**  
**Picture: Steve Dock**

**T**HE Army laid down an impressive marker ahead of this month's Inter-Services campaign with a sublime attacking display in the rejuvenated Mobbs Memorial Match.

Despite slipping to an agonising 27-25 defeat to Northampton Saints, the defence world champions produced some scintillating form to suggest further Twickenham glory is well within their grasp.

Pte Gav Ferguson (RLC), Pte Jack Prasad (1 Scots) and Cpl Tom Chennel (REME) were among the standout performers for the squad, who saw their hopes of pulling off a famous victory cruelly thwarted in the last minute.

The hosts made a blistering start to the contest and a strong forward drive saw hooker Alex Waller cross for the opening try after two minutes.

But the Army quickly fought their

way back into the contest. Cpl Ceri Cummings (REME) kicked a simple penalty in front of the posts and when scrum half Chennel pounced on a loose ball to score in the corner, the Servicemen found themselves with an 8-5 interval lead.

But the home side produced an electrifying start to the second period and tries from wings Josh Skelcey and Tom Collins restored their advantage.

Cummings and Will Hooley exchanged penalties to move the score to 20-11 before a blistering final spell saw the Reds surge into the lead.

Lt Dave Duffus (1 Scots) crossed under the posts following a clinical break from fellow replacement Spr Buks Bakosa (RE) and LCpl Semesi Rokoduguni (Scots DG) added further points just minutes later.

However, the visitors suffered a crushing blow at the death as substitute Chris Biller bundled his way to the line before Hooley calmly slotted the

conversion to snatch the win.

Despite tasting defeat, Army coach Capt Andy Sanger (RE) was delighted with his side's performance against an experienced Northampton outfit.

"The boys performed really well. The scrum was strong, the lineup was good and we exposed them in defence," he said. "We scored three great tries and not many teams will go to Franklin's Gardens and do that."

"We need to be a little bit more clinical but that will come during our Inter-Services training camp."

"We have had a bit of a disjointed season but the player base we have will hold us in good stead."

"We are looking for a big performance against the Royal Navy at Twickenham and the guys are relishing the challenge."

The Army lock horns with the Senior Service on Saturday, April 28.

Tickets for the match are available at [www.arutickets.com](http://www.arutickets.com) ■

## Mobbs Memorial Match

THE Army's visit to Franklin's Gardens marked a reinvention of the annual fixture, which has traditionally featured the world-famous Barbarians as opposition.

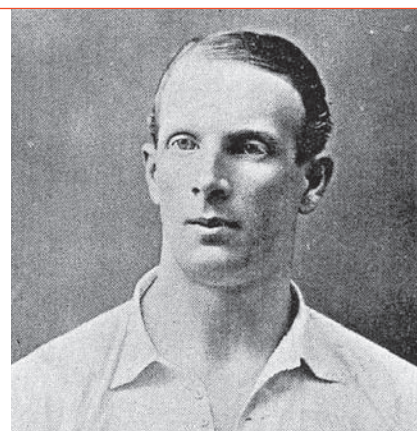
First played in 1921, the game celebrates the life of Lt Col Edgar Mobbs. The former England captain starred on the wing for Northampton and after being refused a commission at the outbreak of the First World War he established his own corps known as the Sportsmen.

More than 260 volunteers joined the unit and

they formed a large part of 7th Battalion, The Northamptonshire Regiment.

Mobbs was killed in action at the Battle of Passchendaele in 1917 but his memory has survived via this showpiece match.

The future of the event was placed in doubt following the withdrawal of the Baa-Baas, but thanks to the efforts of former Saints chairman Keith Barwell it has continued and plans are now in place for the Service to face Northampton and the Bedford Blues on an alternating annual basis.







# Dakar dreams

Injured Servicemen target world's toughest rally as road to recovery gathers pace

**Report: Richard Long**  
**Pictures: Steve Dock**

**A**S hardened front-line soldiers, Capt Tony Harris (RRF) and Cpl Tom Neathway (2 Para) are used to pushing themselves in testing and unforgiving environments.

The duo have seen action in Iraq and Afghanistan but operational injuries have steered them towards a new challenge away from the military world – the gruelling Dakar Rally.

As part of the Race2Recovery team, the amputees will negotiate a 9,000-kilometre route in the space of 15 days while travelling across some of the harshest terrain on the planet.

**“THE LONG RUNS AND RUGGED TERRAIN WILL BE UNLIKE ANYTHING WE HAVE FACED SO FAR”**

A total of four cars will tackle the epic journey in early 2013, with a mix of injured Servicemen and rally experts taking the helm.

The challenge is aimed at inspiring the wider disabled community and will also raise money for Help for Heroes and the Personnel Recovery and Assessment Centre at Tedworth House.

For co-driver Neathway the event builds on a long-standing passion for motor sport that was reignited during

his healing process.

“As I went through my rehabilitation with Tony we started chatting about cars and this idea came about,” he told *SoldierSport* during the team’s launch.

“It is one of the toughest races you can do and it will be seriously hard work. It is difficult for an able-bodied competitor let alone someone who is missing three limbs.

“As soldiers we are used to driving Land Rovers round Iraq and Afghanistan, so being in a car for 16 hours a day is no big deal.

“Ever since I got blown up I have been setting myself goals. I wanted to make sure I could walk at my medal parade, which was a big deal for me.



## Hot wheels: Race2Recovery QT Wildcat

**Top speed:** 120mph

**Power source:** Four-litre V8 engine with just under 300bhp

**Fuel capacity:** 380 litres

**Chassis:** High-strength steel creating extremely rigid safety cell

**Body:** Stylish lightweight

composite shell with easily removable panels for repair work

**Other features:** On-board compressed air system for tyre inflation, automatic jacking system that lifts the vehicle off the ground, six-speed sequential gear box, lithium shock absorbers, capacity to carry up to three spare wheels



I then gave myself the target of going from walking to running.

"To compete in this rally and complete the course is a massive goal. I'm doing this as part of a team but I'm showing other wounded soldiers, and the disabled community as a whole, that anything is possible."

The Dakar Rally is contested in South America and incorporates lush plains, fearsome deserts and the awe-inspiring Andes mountains.

As well as navigating from the front, Neathway will be expected to help counter any mechanical problems experienced along the way.

"If the driver needs a hand I have to be there, but I can do everything on this vehicle with one arm," he said.

"The co-driving is the easy part. I was a sniper in the recce platoon, so I have a background in navigation. But the Dakar Rally will be something completely different."

As part of their preparations the team competed in last season's 4x4 British Cross-Country Championship.

They were due to race in the Tuareg Rally in Morocco as this issue went to press and are planning an attempt at Russia's Silkway Rally later this year.

"Dakar is going to be very different from the ten-minute stages we are used to," Neathway said.

"The long runs and rugged terrain will be unlike anything we have faced so far.

"It is going to be hot. From the UK summer I know what my legs and prosthetics are like, so it is all about building up until I get to a level where I'm comfortable."

The route takes the cars up to altitudes of 4,800 metres in the Andes before dropping below sea level on the flat lands of Argentina.

"In any Dakar attempt the main aim is to finish as only 40 per cent

of vehicles complete the course," driver Harris explained.

"To get all four cars home is a monumental task but the experience within the team will keep us on track.

"The things we did in the military give us a huge head start.

"We can cope with the equipment husbandry, working in harsh environments and sleep deprivation.

"You have to maintain your concentration levels for long spells and there is an incredible demand on the role of the navigators.

"It is not a case of 'easy left' or 'easy right'. There are large areas of ground to cover and you have to choose the right route.

"Individual choice has a big impact on how well you do."

The Race2Recovery team will be using the QT Wildcat for their South American journey and Harris has been highly impressed by the vehicle's performance capabilities.

"They are phenomenal machines; the acceleration is great and you can do 0-60mph in five seconds," the excited officer said.

"The top speed is not fantastic but when you are going cross-country at 100mph that is rapid.

"They handle superbly. They are not indestructible but are certainly built to last. We can come in at the end of a stage, tighten a few nuts and they are good to go again."

For more information on the team and their progress ahead of the Dakar Rally visit [www.race2recovery.co.uk](http://www.race2recovery.co.uk) ■



## Rally reconnaissance

THE Dakar Rally is regarded as one of the most challenging races in the world.

Since landing on the continent of South America, the route has changed on an annual basis but organisers have yet to announce the exact details of the 2013 event.

Drivers can expect to face terrain ranging from arid deserts to rugged mountain ranges as they negotiate the 9,000-kilometre course.

This year marked the 33rd running of the rally and more than three million spectators watched the action in Argentina, with a further one-and-a-half million followers in Chile.

Only 40 per cent of entrants reach the Dakar finish line as sleep deprivation and variable extremes of conditions hit teams hard.

The 2013 attempt begins on January 1 and will take 15 days to complete.







Full steam ahead: Capt Nick Beighton (RE) and Samantha Scowen are hoping a successful start to the 2012 season will book their place at the Paralympics

# Beighton braced for Games push

Interview: Richard Long  
Pictures: Graeme Main

**W**HEN it comes to reflecting on Britain's Olympic triumphs at recent Games, the rowing regatta has been a consistent source of medal success.

From the record-breaking era of Sir Steve Redgrave and Sir Matthew Pinsent to the triumph of Zac Purchase and Mark Hunter in Beijing, the country's oarsmen have certainly been

worth their weight in gold.

Army athlete Capt Nick Beighton (RE) has made remarkable progress on the water since being injured in southern Afghanistan and is aiming to join the sport's growing list of star performers by claiming a place at this year's Paralympics.

The officer, who rows alongside Samantha Scowen in the mixed double scull, has been competing for less than two years but already has a World Cup bronze medal to his name.

He is aiming to build on his initial success at forthcoming trials events and international races before the squad for London 2012 is announced in June.

"We want to show that we can put in a credible performance," Beighton told *SoldierSport* from his training base in Caversham, near Reading.

"At the moment I have only completed six competitive races; three at the World Cup and another three at the World Championships.

"So these events will double my



## PARALYMPIC PATHWAY

**2009:** Beighton is seriously wounded in the Nahr-e Saraj district of Helmand province when he steps on an improvised explosive device. The blast leaves the officer as a double above-knee amputee and he also loses a finger and suffers a pelvic fracture, broken arm and internal injuries.

**2010:** The 30-year-old is introduced to the sport at a Battle Back talent identification day. Beighton joins Guildford Rowing Club and completes a one-kilometre ergometer test with the British team before further surgery temporarily halts his progress in the boat.

**2011:** The newcomer returns for testing in January and beats his previous ergometer time. After three months at work, he begins full-time training in April. Beighton makes his British debut and wins a bronze medal at the World Cup and finishes sixth at the World Championships.

**2012:** Rowing alongside Samantha Scowen in the mixed double scull, the Army athlete will face a number of trial events, training camps and World Cup races ahead of the Paralympics. A final squad announcement is expected in June and Beighton is in a strong position to qualify.





experience in the boat and we need to make the most of coping with the pressure they bring.

"We got a bronze medal at the World Cup and finished in sixth place at the World Championships.

"Considering it was our first time rowing together it was a great result but we were also slightly disappointed as we had such high expectations.

"That disappointment is pushing us on in our training this year.

"We want to get the most out of these races, not necessarily by winning but learning to cope with the pressure. We have to get in a set routine of preparing, rowing and recovering.

"At the London Games we could be out on the boat for three successive days so the training has to be right."

Beighton was injured while on operations in Helmand province in 2009. He had been helping to build security and patrol bases in the Nahr-e Saraj district when he stepped on an improvised explosive device.

"I was lucky in that I was only 40 metres from the front of the patrol base and a company medic was with me in two or three minutes. That probably saved my life," he explained.

The blast saw the soldier lose both legs above the knee and he was left with a broken arm, fractured pelvis and internal injuries.

After starting his recovery process Beighton was introduced to

## "I'M REALLY ENJOYING IT AND HAVE IMPROVED MASSIVELY IN TERMS OF STRENGTH AND SPEED"

rowing during a Battle Back talent identification day just months later.

"They saw I was 6ft 7in and 105 kilograms so I was a guy who could row," he said.

"I spoke to the coaches and they advised me to get fit and healthy and then come back.

"It was something completely new. I wanted to try this rather than returning to the sports I used to do and getting frustrated by not reaching the same levels of performance.

"In the summer of 2010 I started going to Guildford Rowing Club but it was a bit presumptuous to say I was going to be part of the Paralympic team as I hadn't really rowed before.

"I did a one-kilometre ergometer test and that was my first involvement with the British set-up.

"I had some more surgery shortly afterwards and that put me back for a few months but I returned in January 2011 for another trial and beat my previous time."

After a spell back at work he started full-time training with the Great Britain team last April ahead of his first season in the boat.

"Things have settled down now and I have been in the squad environment for ten months," the medal hopeful explained. "Last summer I had only been rowing for six weeks and I found myself competing at the World Cup, it was a total whirlwind.

"I'm really enjoying it and I have improved massively in terms of my strength and speed.

"At the moment we are trying not to think about the Paralympics too much.

"But it would be a huge honour and a once in a lifetime opportunity, especially when I consider where I was two years ago." ■





# Marshman's main event

Interview: Richard Long  
Picture: Graeme Main

**H**AVING battled his way to victory as an Army boxing champion, Pte Jack Marshman (3 Para) has tasted success against the very best the Service has to offer.

Triumphs in the ring have become second nature to the proud Welshman but the 22-year-old has refused to rest on his laurels and is now forging a fearsome reputation in the explosive world of mixed martial arts (MMA).

Marshman boasts a proud 10-0 record in the sport's professional ranks and was about to face the toughest test of his fledgling career as this issue of *Soldier* hit the press.

As one of the brightest stars on the British Association of Mixed Martial Arts' (BAMMA) roster, the punching para was due to challenge for a world title in only his third bout for the ever-expanding promotion.

"I'm fighting Tom Watson, he is the BAMMA middleweight world champion and I will be the underdog,"

Marshman told *SoldierSport*.

"He is a good all-rounder but is probably more of a striker, which is similar to my approach. His style clashes with mine – but in a bad way for him.

"I'm rated as the outsider for this bout but that is only because I'm younger and less experienced.

"This is my third fight for BAMMA and I've got an unbeaten record having been a professional for just over two years now.

"I fought for Shock and Awe and won a title on that show and before that I worked with some smaller promotions, so I have a decent background in the sport."

Marshman, who toured Afghanistan with his battalion in 2008 and 2010, made an instant impression with Europe's premier MMA organisation by wowing audiences at the BAMMA 7 show.

He survived a sustained ground and pound attack from Carl Noon to claim a stunning victory – along with the British middleweight crown – before going on to defend his title against Leeroy Barnes.

"I have boxed for a long time and have been training in MMA since I was 15 years old," Marshman said.

"My main background is in boxing but I'm ideally suited to this.

"Due to the quality of opponents I'm up against I'm now looking to go full-time.

"I want to work my way to the top of the sport, I'm only 22 years old so I have time on my side.

"The Ultimate Fighting Championship is a goal and hopefully I'll be there one day."

While targeting a full professional fighting career and further glory in the cage, the soldier has also been keen to praise the continued support he has received from within Service circles.

He said: "The Army has helped a lot; they have been really flexible over the last few years.

"I'm also training with the 3 Para boxing team and that is going well.

"I always get a massive crowd at my fights and I think this is something that really appeals to young soldiers.

"I got into a bit of trouble when I was younger but joining the Army and training for boxing and MMA got me on the straight and narrow."

Marshman was in action against Watson at the Birmingham National Indoor Arena on March 24.

For results from the event and more information on the BAMMA promotion, visit [www.bamma.com](http://www.bamma.com) ■





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**Heavy hitter:** Army star Bdr Jone Taukeinikoro (RA) completed the team's winning run with an action-packed 7-2 triumph over the Navy's LPT Alfie Hinds

# Boxers cruise to title defence

**Report: Richard Long**  
**Pictures: Graeme Main**

**A**RMY fighters mounted an emphatic defence of their Combined Services boxing title by completing a near clean sweep over their Royal Navy rivals during a dominant night at RAF Cranwell.

The ruthless Reds won eight out of nine bouts against their shell-shocked opponents and with four walkover victories to their name the team cruised to a staggering 12-1 triumph.

The Senior Service tasted defeat in the opening four contests to effectively end their championship bid and with the Army maintaining their superiority after the interval the final result was never in doubt.

Spr Adam Whitfield (RE) started the evening in style as he outgunned a determined Mne Caleb Salero.

The England international

successfully negotiated an opening flurry from his less experienced opponent, who swung hard but failed to land any meaningful blows.

Whitfield picked up the pace in the second and third rounds to register a series of scoring shots in a 14-5 win.

The lightweight clash between Spr Kristian Touze (RE) and Mne Ricky Rose lacked fluency as both fighters struggled to gain the advantage but the Army ace earned a narrow 3-1 victory.

Pte Daniel Allan (3 Para) outclassed ETME Anthony Smith in the welterweight bout, before Spr Tommy Leigh (RE) entered the ring for one of the fights of the night.

The 71kg star was in fine form against LSEA Jason Rogers and was all over his opponent from the start.

Leigh worked good body shots and jabs and remained strong in defence as he claimed a comprehensive 17-3 win.

AB Joel Kirby stopped the rot by

defeating the unfortunate LCpl Shane Sadler (RE) before LCpl John Pontone (Coldm Gds) downed LPT Paul Ormston in their 81kg clash.

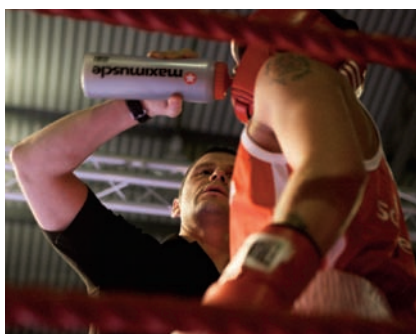
The fighters were locked at 9-9 after three rounds, but the Army man was awarded the contest courtesy of a 22-20 countback.

Cpl Kieran Haywood (4 Rifles) overpowered LPT Mat Phillips in a brutal second round, landing a barrage of punches to inflict two standing counts before the Navy coach called a halt to proceedings.

Heavyweight Rfn Emmanuel Izonritei (4 Rifles) was in confident mood against SLT Kyle de Banks and cruised through three rounds to complete a comfortable 26-4 success.

Bdr Jone Taukeinikoro (RA) brought proceedings to a close with victory over LPT Alfie Hinds in their super heavyweight clash.

After a tight opening the Army boxer







**Winners:** Leigh attacks and Haywood celebrates

forced standing counts in the second and third rounds to seal a 7-2 success and end the evening in style.

The team's destructive display ensured the Reds lifted the prestigious Combined Services title for a 29th consecutive year and coach Sgt Martin Anthony (RLC) was stunned by the emphatic nature of the win.

"I never thought it would be that easy," he told *SoldierSport*.

"It wasn't the strongest Navy team but they wanted to fight.

"A few of the bouts could have gone the other way but the lads have worked very hard. They have been in fantastic form and to take 12 out of 13 contests in my first season is unbelievable.

"We had four walkovers but for us it was all about winning the fights on the night. With the cameras and *Soldier* here we wanted to prove that no matter who stepped in the ring we were the better boxers.

"Tommy Leigh fought out of his skin and was among our standout performers and Jone Taukeinikoro really pulled it out of the bag having missed a lot of training.

"We've got the Amateur Boxing Association Championships up next and we'll probably put eight guys forward. Hopefully they can all get through to the next round.

"I want to get as many fighters to the finals as possible and beat the Army record of four.

"I could not have asked for a better first year, the lads have worked so hard and they deserve their success. It's not all down to me, the boys and the coaching staff have been brilliant." ■



**Goal machine:** SSgt Kelly Morgan (RAPTC) was crowned Inter-Services player of the tournament

## Reds triumph in court battle

Report: Richard Long  
Pictures: Graeme Main

**A** RESOUNDING 59-23 victory over the Royal Navy sealed an emphatic win for the Army's netballers in this season's Inter-Services.

Having beaten defending champions the Royal Air Force in their opening fixture, the Reds took to the court at HMS *Nelson* in confident mood.

SSgt Kelly Morgan (RAPTC) was the star of the show for the visitors and her ruthless accuracy at the net ensured the result was never in doubt.

While the Senior Service clash proved to be plain sailing, the showdown against the RAF was far from easy.

In an end-to-end game the Army held a narrow lead throughout but failed to pull clear as their opponents held firm.

But with Morgan and Maj Laura White (REME) maintaining their composure in front of goal, the Servicewomen celebrated a 35-32 triumph.

The Army's development team also tasted success and skipper White has been delighted with the progress the team has

made this season.

"To complete a clean sweep shows the strength in depth we now have in the squad," the officer told *SoldierSport*.

"The training we have done has really paid off. We had people coming back off tour but, as ever, there were a few missing.

"The positive recruiting message we have had this season has generated a lot of interest. The number of girls attending training has been in the thirties so we had to turn some players away.

"We performed really well on the court and reached the high standards we set ourselves."

White praised the performances of Morgan and goalkeeper Cpl Nordia Masters (AGC (SPS), left) and also paid tribute to coach Monica Vaughan, who is stepping down after 21 years at the helm.

"We have built a really good training regime and through her contacts in the sport we have been able to play against some top civilian teams," she said.

"She has been brilliant but we will be advertising for a new coach. It is a chance to find someone who can bring fresh ideas to the team."

The Army squad will tour South Africa next month. ■







# Magnificent seven seals Services success

Report: Richard Long  
Picture: Graeme Main

**A** SENSATIONAL 7-0 thrashing of the Royal Navy saw the Army women retain their Inter-Services football crown in emphatic style at Aldershot Town's EBB Stadium.

The Reds dominated the contest from the first whistle and double strikes from Cfn Jess Moran (REME), Pte Rachel Rigby (RLC) and Cfn Maxine McIver (REME, pictured above), along with a goal from Cfn Natalie Walker (REME), sealed a famous victory in the tournament decider.

Having recorded a disappointing 1-1 draw with the Royal Air Force in their opening match, the Army needed to win by two goals to clinch the title.

The hosts responded to the challenge in spectacular fashion as they raced to a 3-0 half-time lead and continued the rout after the interval.

"It was a great game," coach Capt Sandra Hodgson (RLC) told *SoldierSport* at full-time.

"Compared to the way we played against the RAF we were simply brilliant.

"Our plan was to go and attack. We knew we could put more than one goal past them and we really went for it.

"To record one of our biggest Inter-Services victories is fantastic."

While the Army's attacking line deservedly took the headlines, Hodgson was quick to praise her team's dogged rearguard effort in ensuring an all-important clean sheet.

"The defence was superb," the coach added. "Gnr Jordan Frayne (RA) was in fine form and Sig Shanice James (R Signals) did an outstanding job for us at right back.

"The Inter-Services is what we are all about, it doesn't really matter what else we do. I am absolutely delighted to win it again." ■

## SPORT SHORTS



■ **THE** Armed Forces rally team kicked off the 2012 season in spectacular style with an action-packed race at the Sunseeker event in Bournemouth.

Royal Air Force duo SAC Tom Aldridge and Cpl Mark Brown took top honours after leading from special stage two, with Army ace Cpl Curtis McKerlie (94 (BY) Sig Sqn) and SAC Ross Hunter in second.

The pairing of Sgt Ross Cookman (RE) and Cpl Mal Lofthouse (RE) finished in third place. The team's next event is the Pirelli Rally at the end of this month.



■ **FOOTBALLERS** from 2nd Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers have celebrated success in the British Army Germany major unit final.

The team defeated 8 Regiment, Royal Logistic Corps in a close-fought match and have now qualified for the semi-finals of the Service's premier cup competition.

"This is my first trophy with the Fusiliers," said Fus James Bryson. "It was a hard game, they put us under pressure. When we attacked we got the goods but they kept coming back at us."



■ **ARMY** distance runners endured a day of mixed emotions at the Inter-Services Cross Country Championships in Dorset.

The senior women's team dominated the field to claim five of the top six spots, with Cpl Danielle Hodgkinson (AMS) crossing the line in first place.

But the men's squad struggled against the might of the Royal Air Force.

The junior team tasted success after claiming three of the top five positions, while the veterans lost by a single point to the RAF.





Picture: Roger Thompson

**Winning run:** The 17 Port and Maritime Regiment Rugby Union team fought their way to a narrow 17-12 triumph in their first Army Premiership Cup final

# Dolphins' delight at dream final

**Report: Richard Long**

**A** STUNNING rearguard action helped steer 17 Port and Maritime Regiment, Royal Logistic Corps to a famous victory in the Army Premiership Cup final.

The Dolphins fought off a fierce late onslaught from 2nd Battalion, The Royal Welsh at Aldershot's Army Rugby Stadium to maintain a slender 17-12 lead and lift the much-coveted trophy for the first time.

Tries from Pte Gav Ferguson, LCpl Malaki Magnus and Pte Dee Diani gave the loggies a crucial advantage but the contest could have easily tipped in favour of the Welsh Warriors.

The 2010 champions made a promising start and took the lead after 15 minutes when centre Pte Amori Nailago found himself on the end of a clinical break and bundled home.

Ferguson hit back just moments later following some great play by Magnus on the wing and with Cpl Charlie Corderoy failing in his conversion attempt the score was tied at 5-5.

But the blues were dealt a blow in the dying embers of the first-half as one of their powerhouse forwards was sent to the sin bin and Pte Chris Davies raced clear to score in the corner.

Pte James Read kicked the extras to open a 12-5 interval lead but the introduction of England Sevens star Pte Isoa Damudamu after the break put the

Dolphins back on the front foot.

Magnus charged down an attempted clearance and crossed to level the match before Diani fought his way to the line following a powerful surge on

the right flank.

Corderoy had opportunities to extend the lead but missed the target with two penalties and a drop goal, leaving the Welsh a springboard for one final push.

But despite being camped in the opposition 22 throughout the closing stages they failed to register any points.

Damudamu had a superb second-half at the base of the scrum while man-of-the-match Corderoy was outstanding at fly half.

Speaking at full-time, Dolphins' director of rugby Maj Wayne Morris told *SoldierSport*: "We knew exactly what type of game it would be.

"I'm so proud of the way we hung in there as The Royal Welsh were smashing at the door. It was an amazing all-round performance.

"This is our first final and the first time we have made it past the quarter-final stage.

"We were confident and I knew we were good enough, but I thought the opposition's experience might tell in the end.

"They controlled the game early on but we came out in the second half with such determination.

"We have lost narrowly in three quarter-finals, all of which were in the last few minutes.

"But there was something different about us in this game and the players had huge faith in one another." ■







**Close call:** LBdr Ryan Kane (RA) puts the Army on the front foot during their hard-fought 1-0 victory over the Royal Navy at Aldershot Town's EBB Stadium

# Unbeaten run not enough for Army stars

**Report: Richard Long**  
**Picture: Graeme Main**

**G**OAL difference proved to be the deciding factor in this season's Inter-Services football championship as the Army men fell short for the second successive term.

Despite finishing the campaign unbeaten, the Reds watched the Royal Air Force lift the trophy for the fifth consecutive year after a 2-2 draw in the tournament decider at Shrewsbury.

A penalty from Sgt Paul Douglass (RLC) gave the title hopefuls a 1-0 win over the Royal Navy in their opening match, but a 2-0 victory for the light

blues against the same opposition saw them emerge triumphant courtesy of a single goal.

The airmen took an early lead against a determined Army side when Cpl Steve Norton rounded keeper Cpl Daryll Evans (RLC) before converting from close range.

Midfielder LCpl Jay Bates (R Signals) levelled the game with a stunning 35-yard drive before skipper Sgt Glenn Davidson (AGC (RMP)) put the visitors ahead with a well-struck shot from the edge of the area.

But the lead was lost in the dying minutes of the first-half as Sgt Dyfan Pearce headed home from a set play.

Despite missing out on Inter-Services glory, the Army lifted the Southern Counties Cup and finished the season unbeaten in competitive football.

"We were very disappointed to draw with the RAF," manager Maj Richie Bell (R Signals) told *SoldierSport*.

"On the balance of play we were the better side but the luck was with them on the night.

"The changing room was like a graveyard afterwards but the lads should be proud of their achievements.

"We are not far off. We've got some fantastic young players and the coaching staff have really moved Army football forward over the past year." ■

## Cochrane signs off in style

THE Army Under 23s secured the first silverware of the season after a 2-1 win over the Royal Air Force saw them lift the Inter-Services title.

Striker LCpl Jay Hubbard (RE) proved to be the hero in the tournament decider at Farnborough as his second-half brace fired the Reds to glory in coach SSgt Sean Cochrane's (RADC) last game in charge.

Having beaten the Royal Navy by the same score a week earlier, the young guns headed into the contest in confident mood.

Hubbard proved to be the focal point for the Army attack and the forward saw a lofted effort drift just wide in the opening minutes.

Sig Nick Harvey (R Signals) tested the RAF keeper with a well-struck free kick in a first half that was characterised by solid defensive play and few clear-cut chances.

But the match was turned on its head in the 53rd minute when Spr Simba Green (RE) was

dismissed for kicking out at an opponent.

Instead of capitalising on their numerical advantage, the RAF found themselves on the back foot as Hubbard took advantage of some hesitant defending to convert from a tight angle.

The Army doubled their lead in the final quarter when the striker raced onto a pass from Spr Albie Wright (RE) and produced a controlled finish when one-on-one with the keeper.

SAC Jason Francis reduced the arrears when he bundled the ball home from a long throw but the Reds stood firm during a late onslaught.

Speaking at full-time a delighted Cochrane said: "The RAF are a good side but I knew we would be more than a match for them.

"Jay Hubbard was superb but we played really well as a team.

"I'm out of the Army in May and I will look back on this success with fond memories. It has been one of the highlights of my career."





## SPORT SHORTS

■ **SUPER** fit soldier CSgt Daniel Crookes (3 R Welsh (V)) will tackle the daunting Marathon des Sables this month on a mission to raise money for ABF The Soldiers' Charity.

The gruelling event sees athletes cover 150 miles in six stages in temperatures as high as 57 degrees. They also face the added challenge of carrying all their food and equipment for the week.

Crookes starts his quest on April 8 and donations can be made at [www.justgiving.com/danny-crookes-marathondessables-2012](http://www.justgiving.com/danny-crookes-marathondessables-2012)

■ THE Army Angling Federation hosts its group eight carp match at Nicholls Leisure, near Hythe Ranges in Kent from April 20 to 22.

Anyone interested in joining the organisation should log on to [www.armycarpers.com](http://www.armycarpers.com)

■ **ARMED** Forces personnel are being offered 600 free tickets for The Mixed Martial Arts Show Live at Birmingham's NEC next month.

The event will feature appearances by a host of top fighters including Michael Bisping, Dan Henderson and Rashad Evans, along with Army star Pte Jack Marshman (3 Para).

The show is being held on May 12 and 13 and personnel can book their place via [www.ticketsfortroops.org.uk](http://www.ticketsfortroops.org.uk)

■ THE Army completed a clean sweep in this year's Inter-Services squash championships by winning the men's, women's, veterans' and under-25's competitions.

SSgt Lenny Westover completed the victory charge by taking the fifth game in a thrilling match with his Royal Air Force rival to seal a 3-2 success for the men.

■ **SERVICE** personnel are being offered discounted ticket rates for this year's British Superbikes campaign courtesy of top team MSS Bathams Kawasaki.

The outfit is offering race weekend packages for £75 at all events this season and will also be supporting the work of military charity Help for Heroes over the coming months.

For more information on the offer and to download a ticket application form visit the MSS Bathams Kawasaki page on Facebook.

■ **SUPER** League outfit the Huddersfield Giants will be backing The Yorkshire Regiment Charitable Trust with a bucket collection and sales of wristbands at their game against Hull FC on April 9.

The team will also be offering personnel admission at the discounted rate of £15 – £5 of which will be donated to the charity.

Tickets are limited to six per person and can be booked via the box office on 01484 484123 quoting Armed Forces offer.

A valid Service identification card must be shown when collecting tickets on the day.



**Starring role:** Maj Paula Nicholas (AGC (SPS)) fires the Army forward during their 1-0 win over the RAF

# Women hold firm to take title

**Report: Richard Long**  
**Pictures: Graeme Main**

**A** DOMINANT defensive display ensured the Army women retained their Inter-Services hockey title after two days of tough competition against their Forces rivals in Aldershot.

With goals at a premium, the defending champions saw their ever-reliable rearguard form the platform for a successful campaign against rapidly improving Royal Navy and Royal Air Force sides.

Cpl Amanda Potgieter (REME) scored the only goal in a narrow 1-0 win over the light blues in the team's opening fixture, before strikes from Capt Nic George (R Signals) and Pte Becky Edwards (AGC (SPS)) secured a 2-0 win over the Senior Service.

With all three squads making rapid strides forward, Army stalwart Maj Paula Nicholas (AGC (SPS)) believes the tournament will go from strength-to-strength over the coming years.

"It was a very tight game against the RAF, but we expected that," the newly crowned Combined Services

sportswoman of the year explained.

"The Navy have improved significantly this season and that will make future Inter-Services a lot more competitive, which is a great boost for the competition.

"From an Army perspective there were a number of newcomers involved and that was pleasing to see.

"Players like Becky Edwards, Pte Emily Lewis (AGC (SPS)) and Capt Harriet Bell (R Signals) all caught the eye and they will drive the team forward in the coming campaigns.

"Defensively we were very strong and we are obviously delighted to win the competition again this year."

While the women lifted yet another trophy, the men made the worst possible start to their Inter-Services bid.

After taking the lead against eventual champions the RAF they slipped to a crushing 6-1 defeat but managed to restore some pride with a 2-1 win against the Navy.

The Army's masters teams were both victorious, while the under-23 side thrashed the airmen 7-2 before losing 3-2 to the Senior Service. ■





# final word



**We asked troops from 12th Mechanized Brigade for their thoughts about deploying to Afghanistan on Operation Herrick 16**

INTERVIEWS: JOE CLAPSON  
PICTURES: STEVE DOCK



## **Pte Shaun Roberts (R Anglian)**

This is my second tour so I am thinking about things like contacts and staggering on for long hours but you cannot predict what the Taliban will be doing. We get all the kit we need and are trained on the various different weapons in case someone goes down and we need to jump on something else. I am 100 per cent confident in the vehicles too, especially the Mastiff.



## **LSgt Leon Collins (WG)**

More than anything I am concerned about my family worrying about me during this tour. Afghanistan has seen more casualties than places I have served before such as Kosovo, Bosnia and Iraq so that will be on people's minds. The kit has improved a lot compared with the past and we get some really good stuff issued, including boots and body armour.



## **LCpl Tim Bennett (RMP)**

The recent Warrior explosion does bring risks to mind but with the amount of training we've done, I feel ready and excited to be going. I wouldn't say that I am apprehensive because we are prepared to deploy and, to be honest, I'm bored of the build-up now. I've only been in the Army for 18 months so I can't compare equipment, but Osprey and the contents of the black bag are helping to save blokes.



## **Tpr Mark Skeavington (LD)**

It is very exciting to be getting out there and I have full confidence in our training and the kit we'll be using. I am completely new to going out on operations but we are constantly getting updated on what the situation is going to be like. We will always be at risk, no matter how much technology improves, but the best thing to do is to get on with the job and be professional.



## **LCpl Michael Brunt (RE)**

I think the biggest thing to think about is the preparation for what we will find out there. The influx of improvised explosive devices is always going to be a worry but training procedures are evolving and continually improving. The equipment and assets we have are fantastic, especially the search dogs. We can't complain with the amount of money that has been thrown at us.



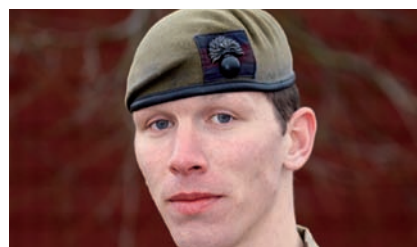
## **Lt Stephen Platts (REME)**

I am looking forward to going and the amount of training we've done in the last six months has put us in a really good position from a technical and military viewpoint. Having all the new kit is a positive thing but it does bring challenges for the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers because it means we need more instruction in order to be able to fix everything.



## **Cpl Rob Slater (REME)**

This is my first tour of Afghanistan so I am looking forward to utilising the new support vehicle recovery asset. In an ideal world we wouldn't be busy but when we get to theatre we will be dealing with everything from road accidents to IED strikes and using our crane to lift things on camp. There are some apprehensive young soldiers but it is just a case of building up their experience.



## **LSgt Andrew Finlan (Gren Gds)**

I feel a mixture of emotions, from wanting to be out in Helmand province to the anxiety of leaving family behind. But this is my third tour of Afghanistan so I have a set routine for saying goodbye to everyone before I leave. Since the war in Iraq the kit has come on in leaps and bounds and I am also confident in the vehicles and the training we have had on them.



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